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Notes of the Week

THE settlement, in the small hours of Thursday morning, of what threatened to be one of the most devastating strikes we have yet experienced in this country is a feather in the cap of the Ministry of Labour. We wish that we could say that it was creditable to anyone else. But the more we examine the antecedent circumstances the less easy is it to understand the attitude of the employers. They have had, of course, in common with all employers, extremely difficult and trying conditions to deal with; but the fact remains that terms which, before the strike, they declared to the men's representatives to be impossible, they immediately granted before a Committee of Inquiry.

A NARROW ESCAPE

We have already expressed our sense of the justice of the men's case in demanding a reconsideration of the conditions governing their work. Where we think they weakened their position in the eyes of the public was in refusing the offer of the employers to grant an immediate increase of a shilling and submit the other outstanding differences to arbitration. The ugly fact remains that but for skilful intervention the country would now be in the second week of a dislocation which would not only have caused immediate distress to an immense part of the working population, but would have resulted in the permanent alienation from our shores of a great deal of business on which employers and employed alike depend for their living. We trust that the Court of Inquiry set up by the Government will pursue its investigations to the end and explain how it is that terms which are one day refused as impossible are conceded and accepted a few days afterwards.

THE MIDDLEMAN

Until the profiteering of middlemen, which at present is one of the chief causes of the high cost of living in this country, is curtailed and controlled, so long will labourers find it hard to get, and employers to pay, a sufficient wage. The things that happen to a ton of coal, which quadruples its price in the course of its journey from the pit-head to the householder's coal

cellar, would, if we could trace them, throw a most informative light on this question; and there is hardly an article of food in common use upon which too many people are not making a living in its course from the producer to the consumer. The dock labourers and transport workers handle almost everything that is used in this country, and it will continue to be a scandal if the conditions of their employment make it impossible for them to earn a living wage. It is the patient public that pays either the striker or the profiteer; and public opinion must call for some system of arbitration which shall make either of these barbarous extremes impossible.

ORDEAL BY IDEALS

The debate on the Air Force in the House of Commons on Tuesday was deeply unsatisfactory. We can all applaud a desire for disarmament and international goodwill, but pious resolve will lead but a little way towards its consummation. The Under-Secretary for Air cut a deplorable figure and had to be rescued from the morass in which he was floundering by the intervention of Mr. J. H. Thomas. But the bad impression remains. Reliance upon idealism alone in this wicked world will bring very prompt disaster. And is it so certainly acting in a spirit of true idealism to leave the inhabitants of a nation for whom one is responsible exposed to every kind of danger, suffering and ruination, not to say annihilation? Really, this will not do; and the Government will find itself out of office with astonishing speed unless it is uncompromisingly firm on the question of national security.

SOME FACTS

What are the hard facts? Sir Samuel Hoare, late Secretary of State for Air, exposed some facts which made a profound impression on the House. At the time of the Chanak crisis Great Britain had exactly twenty-four aeroplanes available for home defence. Subsequently the Conservative Government took steps to increase this negligible figure by gradual expansion to six hundred. That is a thing for which the country owes a debt of gratitude to the late administration; but even that is not enough, and is not yet completed. And now comes the egregious Mr. Leach with his gospel of unpreparedness. True, he said that the Government had no intention of modifying the present

programme for the time being, but the whole tone of his speech was disturbing, and the Government refused to accept the motion calling for a one-power standard. A one-power standard is the very lowest compatible with the security of this country; but at the present time we are outnumbered by the French in aeroplane strength by at least ten to one, and when the decision was taken last year to increase our defence squadrons by thirty-six, France replied with an increase of seventy-two. A world safe for idealism indeed!

THE PLEASURES OF OPPOSITION

Both Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Austen Chamberlain seem to be recovering an almost boyish delight in use of the opportunity enjoyed by spokesmen of the Opposition. From each we have lately had speeches in which the weaknesses of the Government and of the Liberals were touched off with keen yet good-natured ridicule. Mr. Baldwin has revived rapidly, Mr. Chamberlain is much more at ease than he has been for a long time, and together they have given the party excellent models of Parliamentary attack. We look, however, for more audacity and nimbleness from the rank and file of Conservative members. Their serious work will not suffer if they allow themselves more liberty and lighter weapons in dealing with the solemn pretences of politics.

WELSH LOCAL VETO

A debate on temperance never produces any novel argument, but it invariably arouses an intensity of feeling which only a question of the very first importance could justify. That temperance is such a question we cannot admit. How and when people drink, this side of soaking in poisonous liquor to their positive ruination, is not a matter for State control. It requires boldness to say so in these days, but it is the truth, and failure to perceive it is a sign of decadence, not of increased sensitiveness of political conscience. Ninety-nine per cent. of the people in Wales, as elsewhere, should be left ample room for the exercise of their own discretion; the remainder should be dealt with as and when they offend against decency and peace, whether under the influence of liquor or under that of temperance oratory.

FRANCS AND POLITICAL FORTUNES

Paris has been in a panic over the further fall of the franc, and it is clear that M. Poincaré's position is not what it was. French currency has depreciated rather more than a hundred per cent. since he came into office, and prices of food and other things have risen correspondingly. Rightly or wrongly he gets the blame. But he has succeeded in forcing his financial measures through the Chamber, though with greatly reduced majorities, which tell their own tale of loss of power and prestige. So marked has this been that speculation has been anxiously providing him with a successor—not an easy matter—and there has even been a call for the veteran Clemenceau. As we write, M. Poincaré is trying his fortune with the Senate, whose attitude towards him is on some points less favourable than that of the Chamber, and the upshot is uncertain. Meanwhile the tendency in France, in her chastened mood, is to look for a change of policy in the Ruhr; and hopes, in which everyone will share, are expressed that the coming reports of the Expert Committees will point the way to a settlement.

THE GERMAN SITUATION

The situation in Germany shows a distinct improvement. The resignation of Dr. von Kahr, who had been dictator of Bavaria, indicates that there is little fear now of the dismemberment of the Reich. The disappearance from the Palatinate of the Separatists is

another hopeful sign, though reprisals may lead to some disturbances in that area, if the local Nationalists are not kept in order. In the Reichstag the Nationalists are trying to bring about the fall of the Government, the position of which is not too secure unless supported by the Socialists, but they are likely to give that support, for not to do so would precipitate a general election, with a probable swing to the Right. But the best feature of the situation is the stabilization of the mark, which has led to a revived feeling of confidence throughout the country.

THE AMBASSADORS' CONFERENCE

Is the Ambassadors' Conference doomed? On Monday the Prime Minister said in reply to a question in the House of Commons that it was not the intention of the Government to entrust to the Conference any "special business" in the future. But its function has hitherto been to deal with special business, as, for instance, the Corfu incident, regarding which its action could not be considered satisfactory. It is possible that Mr. MacDonald had this in mind, but more probable that his remark was inspired by recent occurrences regarding Memel. Matters relating to the port of Memel which are still unsettled as between Lithuania and Poland were referred some weeks ago to the League of Nations, which appointed a commission under an American chairman to effect a complete settlement. As head of the Ambassadors' Conference M. Poincaré wrote the other day to the League circumscribing its powers in this direction, and this was resented not only by the League but also by Mr. MacDonald.

THE MEDITERRANEAN FLEET

With the removal of the menace in the North Sea, nothing is more natural than the strengthening of the Mediterranean Fleet. Italy, however, seems inclined to take exception to this on the ground that, as Egypt has been given independence, British interests in the Mediterranean are no longer so great as they were, and therefore need less and not more protection. Apart from the fact that the independence of Egypt is modified by the "reserved subjects" on which no settlement has been reached, the route by the Suez Canal to India and Australasia remains the most vital of the sea communications of England and the Empire, and cannot be over-protected. It is inconceivable that the control of the Canal will ever be willingly surrendered, and this is emphasized by the redistribution of the Fleet.

MR. MACDONALD'S DUAL RESPONSIBILITY

If the Premier were physically more robust, and if there were thirty-six hours in the day, we should approve of his being in charge of foreign as well as of general policy. For the alternative to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as Foreign Secretary will not very well bear thinking upon. But he can double the parts only for the time being. His health, the demands on his time, and the requirements of the Parliamentary situation will oblige him to transfer the direction of foreign policy to a colleague ere long. Some Conservatives see in that at least the advantage that on foreign questions the Premier's endorsement and the Foreign Secretary's proposals will not be in the same handwriting. They are disposed to welcome the ending of a state of affairs in which one Minister constitutes a quorum. They had, however, better wait and see on whom the Foreign Secretaryship devolves.

CONSERVATIVE WORKING-MEN CANDIDATES

The effort now being made to support the Parliamentary candidature of Conservative working-men deserves the most generous assistance. It would be idle, how-

ever, to ignore the difficulties. By nature, the majority of manual workers in the country are Conservative, but it is hardly among them that we find the talents and the ambitions distinguishing Socialist leaders. In the working classes the Conservative is very often averse from those activities in which men sharpen their political wits, and willing to leave political leadership to others. The problem is to get out of comparative content the energy of discontent. Still, suitable candidates are probably in excess of the opportunities hitherto provided for them, and expansion of those opportunities must be undertaken.

OIL AND ICE

One of the immediate results of the oil scandal in the United States has been the resignation of Mr. Denby, the Secretary of the U.S. Navy; but his fall was lubricated, so to speak, by President Coolidge giving him an excuse which had nothing to do with oil or the oil leases he is charged with having disposed of contrary to the interests of the navy. Mr. Coolidge suddenly issued an order cancelling the Polar flight of the *Shenandoah*, and Mr. Denby forthwith resigned. It will be recalled that Mr. Denby in January stated to the Naval Committee of the House of Representatives that the chief purpose of the airship's flight to the North Pole was the exploration of the Arctic with a view to its annexation. He spoke of the present unoccupied condition of the Arctic as being a constant challenge to America. But it seems that the challenge of the Esquimaux and Polar bears must remain unmet.

THE BALTIC CONFERENCE

Success has not attended the Conference of the Baltic States held at Warsaw in the closing days of last week. The States taking part were Poland, Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, and though something in the shape of an arbitration treaty was arranged, no agreement was reached on any of the other and more important questions discussed. Finland, believing that she will not be attacked by Russia, is not keen on entering a Baltic League, the main incentive of which is fear of Russian aggression. The chief cause of the failure is the standing quarrel between Lithuania and Poland over Vilna. It will be noted that Lithuania was not represented at the Conference. It is this quarrel that has militated against all the Baltic Conferences and it will continue to do so in the future, unless there is a settlement of the Vilna dispute; but of that there is no sign. Still, the nucleus of the League exists in the definite alliance of Estonia and Latvia.

THE CRISIS IN INDIA

The Government of India has been severely defeated in the Assembly. Casual reassuring voices are raised in the Press here to remind us that this does not necessitate acceptance of the motion carried against the Government or preclude it from carrying on its work. It does not; but it puts the Government of India in the position of having to govern against what is, by hypothesis, the will of the country or giving up the hypothesis altogether. The first course provides our enemies in India with just the cry they need; the second is impossible without the consent of Parliament and recantation of all the pious theories of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, and would provoke a furious outburst in India. Revision of the crazy constitutional experiment in that country is not due for five years yet, but it is plain that it will not, in its present form, last for that length of time. The rate of change, as we have always contended, will be determined, not by British estimates of the increased political capacity of Indians, but by the difficulty of working the system.

LOYALTY BY STAGES

The advent of Socialism to power is being followed by the corruption of much rugged independence. The process is gradual, and as regards the Fabians, has not yet gone very far. Thus, these folk, probably unaccustomed to drinking healths at all, and certainly not given to ceremonial recognition of the Crown at their austere tables, are still disputing whether at their dinner they should drink, like militarists and members of the *bourgeoisie*, to the King or not. The younger generation are almost solidly for this gesture of decency. Some of the veterans, however, believe it to be seriously detrimental to their movement. But we are hopeful. We shall yet hear of the Fabians not only drinking the King's health, but following the early Victorian mess custom of breaking the glasses lest any lesser health be drunk from them.

OMELETTES

London is now the richer for a restaurant, in the Piccadilly Circus neighbourhood, at which a genuine Spanish omelette can be obtained. Yet it will not seduce any true gourmet from devotion to the omelettes of France, nor yet persuade him that any professional can produce a better omelette than an intelligent amateur. The amateur's greatest danger is the use of an apparatus strongly recommended by all the Stores, but totally unsuited for the making of omelettes. Instead of purchasing one of these Satanic devices, the sage will always use an ordinary pan, only reserving it exclusively for omelettes, and cleaning it by wiping instead of by washing. He will also refrain from delaying the completed omelette in order to make its exterior more decorative.

THE PATH TO SOCIAL PEACE

THE recent railway strike and the short-lived dock strike are timely reminders that the bitterness of class-warfare is not abated by the arrival of the Labour Party in the seats of the mighty. The merits and demerits of the lamentable dock strike we examine in a Note of the Week, but unfortunately it seems likely that other industrial disputes will follow that now settled. The so-called working classes very naturally expect under the new regime to exercise their indubitable rights with greater freedom and frequency than ever before; and the typical member of the working classes thinks, to use a lucid sentence from a contemporary, that "the measure of his rights is his power to hurt you." It is time for those who have not the honour to belong to the working classes to put their house in order.

How is this to be done? They cannot meet force by force, for the reason, which cannot be blinked, that they are very much the weaker. The path of concession is equally hopeless. No concessions, however extravagant, will satisfy the insatiable: and no agreements won by concessions will bind those who have made it clear that they are destitute of honour. But if neither fighting nor yielding offers any hope of peace, what third course is possible beyond hopeless resignation? The one thing, if it could be compassed, would be to decline the combat altogether; nor is this so impossible as it sounds. For consider that any struggle implies a common ground. You cannot win a victory in a game over a man who does not accept the rules of the game. You cannot beat a man at lawn tennis who appears on the court with a croquet mallet or a golf-club; nor can you with real self-applause claim to be better at the Higher Mathematics than your neighbour is at Bridge. Only while two men are aiming at the same goal can they enter into rivalry. The application of this principle to the social problem would solve it. The workers, small blame to them, are out for the things of which they believe the other classes to have had for centuries, and to be still

enjoying, a disproportionate share. The workers are out to have these things, or many of them, not because they want them but because others cling to them. The proposed Capital Levy is an admirable instance of this mood. No one, not under restraint, can really suppose that the confiscation of another man's property, however legalized, is a sound financial measure. But Labour does not want sound financial measures; it wants, like the Fat Boy, whom it resembles in certain other respects, to make our flesh creep. The railway-men did not really suppose that disorganizing every industry in the country, in defiance of their own signatures, would improve their own position. They thought, quite rightly, that it would frighten everybody and show their power—their power, that is, to hurt. What they do not see, and what the educated classes are more culpably blind to, is that the superiority they resent is not, ultimately, a superiority in wealth or comfort or leisure, but in tastes: and that is a superiority, a definite mastery, which no strike, however prolonged, however disastrous, can imaginably shake. When they have brought industry to such a degree of ruin that we are all eating rats, and even the dole can be no longer paid, they will be no whit nearer their goal of proving themselves the better or even the stronger men, if only we refuse to accept their standards.

This, perhaps, is mere snobbery; but it may serve to symbolize the truth that the working-classes are intellectually as much the weakest part of the nation as they are the strongest physically and numerically. It is a truth which perversity itself could hardly dispute; for in the intellectual field they are handicapped not only by an inferior education, but by a less favourable heredity and environment. The more shame to the educated portion of the community, if, neglecting or belittling this immense advantage which a mere accident of birth has thrust upon them, they lower themselves to a degrading struggle—in which they are foredoomed to defeat—for the material comforts and superfluities of life. Dean Inge has hinted, in his lectures on Plotinus, that the tradition of civilization will only be preserved, if at all, in the dark days ahead of us, by a devoted few who, spurning the idols of comfort and security, devote themselves for no reward to the service of truth and beauty. With every strike, and almost with every new Budget, the bourgeoisie—to use up-to-date nomenclature—see their margin of security diminishing; and their hearts are shaken. Where is the prophet who, instead of speaking comfortable things, will tell them the stern truth, that that margin is bound to vanish altogether, at no distant date: and that their remedy is not in trying to stop irresistible forces, but in learning to do without what they will infallibly lose? Plain living and high thinking are not merely an ideal for prigs: they are, especially in these days, the royal road to happiness and tranquillity.

Most schemes of social improvement have been hitherto proposed *ab extra* for the betterment of the masses by the few; and their failure is before our eyes. The task now laid clearly before the minority is to improve themselves, at least in the capital point of drawing their enjoyment from purer, cheaper, and therefore less vulnerable sources. At present they are infected with the fever of the proletariat for improving or strengthening their outward circumstances, when their only hope is to increase their inward riches. These are a form of wealth which no Communist covets, and no "direct action" can destroy. Moreover, if the trade unions once suspect that we value Truth and Beauty, Honour and Justice above dividends and motor cars, they will hanker after them too: and in such a class-war defeat would be no less honourable than victory. So long as the battle is fought for temporal ends, there can be no peace without the practical annihilation of one side: and it is not hard to foretell which side that would be.

TUTANKH-AMEN AND EGYPTIAN INDEPENDENCE

THERE is something squalid and indecent about the dispute between Mr. Howard Carter and the Egyptian Government. Apart altogether from the rights and wrongs of the case, the essential littleness of the point at issue in relation to a circumstance of such stupendous and majestic import must shock all sensitive persons. It is piquant to reflect what would be the emotions of those who over three thousand years ago sealed Tutankh-Amen in his tomb—sealed him, as they thought, for ever—could they learn of the squabble which has arisen over the matter of attendance at his exhumation. The contrast is grotesquely ironic. What could be less in accordance with its background than this ignominious dispute? A Pharaoh might send ten thousand to massacre to resolve a whim, but his sense of dignity would prevent him, we may be sure, from engaging in a public squabble about it. But now, while the world stands tipped with eager interest, the man whose industry and enterprise have made possible this greatest of all archaeological discoveries, and the representatives of the peoples which inherit this tremendous past, engage in acrimonious controversy over the precise privileges of Press photographers as opposed to those of the curious aristocracy. The thing has the impertinence of sparrows chaffering among cathedral rafters while the congregation attends upon some tremendous ceremony. Indeed, it is worse, for sparrows know no better. If the dispute were simply what it appears to be, it could be dismissed with a contemptuous word; but unfortunately the situation, trivial though it seem, is in reality of greater significance. The actual subject of dispute remains unimportant, for whatever its outcome the task undertaken will be completed. The work is bigger than the men engaged upon it, and if Mr. Carter's hands are not to finish what they have begun, then the hands of others will. But it may be observed in passing that the Egyptian Government will do an ill day's work for civilization, and incidentally for their own national history, if they show too obstinate a spirit in this affair; for they have no experts at their command able to complete the undertaking with the skill of Mr. Carter and his associates, whose licence they have now cancelled.

But the main point which we would stress lies deeper. The Egyptian Government has expressed itself "determined to ensure respect for the supreme rights of civilization." How, may we ask, are these rights compromised by the admittance of visitors to the tomb? The Government would seem to take itself a trifle over-seriously in this matter, and while standing obstinately on its dignity, to remain insensible to the supreme indignity of the situation. The Government may—though we do not admit this—have right on its side so far as concerns the strict letter of the agreement between themselves and Mr. Carter; where they quite plainly have not right on their side is in the uncompromising rigidity and frigidness of their attitude. The reference to the "supreme rights of civilization" is obviously nonsense. In fact it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in this miserable affair they are behaving in a wilfully hostile and provocative manner. There can be little doubt that their action is mainly political and that they are making use of a trivial difference of opinion between persons to foster a serious difference of opinion between nations. In short, they are concerned but little with the question of who visits the Luxor tomb or when they visit it, but a great deal with animosity towards Britain; and they are anxious to exploit any opportunity of fostering that animosity and of creating a popular impression among their following. The Egyptian Press is taking a particularly virulent line in the dispute, and the extremists may be relied upon to use the incident for all that it is worth. Moreover, it is perhaps not altogether without significance that

the Director-General of Antiquities to the Egyptian Government is a Frenchman.

We make every excuse we can. It may be that the national sense (though there can be but little historical consciousness in such mixed blood) is in some degree piqued by the spectacle of foreigners foraging among their native monuments. But when the Egyptian Government puts its foot down it should remember—if it wants to remember anything that makes for moderation and agreement—that but for the enterprise and industry of the foreigner in the persons of the late Lord Carnarvon and Mr. Carter, there would be nothing for it to put its foot down about. A Government new to power and the use of power, self-consciously aware of its dignity and importance and ready to avail itself of every opportunity for stirring up trouble, is prone—like all insufficiently educated persons or communities—to abuse its privileges and over-ride its discretion. We can only say that its action over this Luxor dispute bears out with some force the arguments of those who have always expressed misgiving as to the fitness of the Egyptians for self-government. This is not an auspicious beginning. And it seems a little hard that the fruits of experiment should be visited first, and heavily, on the luckless Mr. Carter and Tutankh-Amen.

We may add a word on one aspect of the matter which has—somewhat naturally—received widespread attention in the Press, but seems to us of quite secondary importance. We refer to the arrangement whereby the world copyright of news and photographs of the proceedings in the tomb were granted to *The Times*. That paper has been at pains during this week to disclaim anything in the nature of a monopoly, and it is only fair to our contemporary to emphasize the fact that it granted permission to the Egyptian Press to use any of its material free of charge. So that, as far as Egypt is concerned, the grievance is an imaginary one, and those who seek in it an explanation of Egyptian obstruction are without support from facts. But we suggest to our contemporary that it would be a graceful gesture, and one in keeping with the best traditions of English journalism, were it now voluntarily to renounce whatever arrangement was made between it and the late Lord Carnarvon. On its own word it would have nothing financially to lose, and it would have much morally to gain; while the journalistic world at large would be the easier for the removal of a sore which, however mistakenly, seems to have been the cause of considerable irritation.

SOME NOTES ON 'PARSIFAL'

By DYNELEY HUSSEY

DURING the last week of their season, the British National Opera Company revived 'Parsifal' with an excellent Gurnemanz; a Kundry who easily surpassed the other ladies, English, French and German, I have seen in the part; a choir which reproduced with accuracy, even to the flatness of pitch in the men's voices, the main characteristics of an Anglican Cathedral service; a scratch orchestra, and a conductor who proved an intellectual peg in a mystical hole. Mr. Goossens probably has very little sympathy with this gallimaufry of morbid psychology, black magic, vegetarianism, conventional militaristic chivalry, Wild Birds' Protection Acts, queer metaphysics and sensual religion—some of them admirable things in themselves. The audience came in a reverent spirit and subfusc clothes, as to church. I would not for a moment belittle the sincerity of the singers or spectators; indeed, their attitude towards it was the most impressive thing about the performance. But, while I will not go so far as to proclaim with Nietzsche that 'Parsifal' should be regarded as an outrage on morals, I do find something indecent in this travesty of the Christian religion and in the perversion of the central rite of the Church to an emotional mummary. Perhaps one should not go to 'Parsifal'

unless one can accept it at Wagner's own valuation, as a divine revelation not lower in authority than the Canonical Books. The music of 'Parsifal' is, first of all, a perfect expression of the libretto; it is morbid and often dull—and yet the work of a master.

When Wagner came to write it, his intellectual powers, never strong in logic, were on the wane; his physical strength, too, was enfeebled by the continual nervous strain to which it had been subjected. But with this lowering of his vitality, both in body and mind, came an increase in the refinement of his musical imagination. 'Parsifal' is like the record, made by a super-sensitive instrument, of Wagner's emotional reactions to the situations in the drama. It is far more delicate in texture than the earlier works; it is quite purged of all grossness and blatancy; and it never sinks to the triviality and stupidity which we find occasionally in the 'Ring,' though there is a dangerous approach to it in the use of the harps during the last scene. But the loss of vitality is a serious matter; for that is one of the most important qualities required for a work, which takes nearly five hours to perform. There is no disputing the dullness of many pages in 'Parsifal.' One has to listen; not just hear, as it were unconsciously. Gurnemanz's long speeches, with their monotonous cadences, are yet one more example of the literalness of Wagner's mind. Given a prosy old gentleman with an amateur taste for moral philosophy, he reproduces all the symptoms of a club bore's anecdote. I must, parenthetically, pay tribute to Mr. Norman Allin for having made the part almost interesting by his beautiful singing and intelligent acting. Gurnemanz is typical of the whole work. There are a few moments when the music really comes to the boil. One of these is Amfortas's cry of anguish; another Kundry's relation of how, in a former life, she mocked Christ on the Cross—"Ich sah Ihn und lachte." Wagner shows here his extraordinary power of solving a difficult problem in the simplest way. He leads the voice up to high B and then lets it drop, unaccompanied, through nearly two octaves to middle C sharp. Simple, yes; but not for the singer. Usually it degenerates into a scream on any notes in the scale. Correctly sung, it has the shattering effect of the horrible blasphemy itself, and the greatest moment in Miss Gladys Ancrum's fine performance was when she hit those two notes accurately and with singing tone.

It is difficult to defend the psychology of 'Parsifal,' and especially of the hero, who is a conception imaginable only by a neurotic sensualist. I will not stress the inconsistency between the fuss which is made about the swan and the normal medieval attitude adopted towards the dispatch by the sword of any man who crosses the knight's path. Wagner does not obtrude this side of Parsifal's character upon us with much insistence. But one cannot refrain from asking whether such a simpleton as Parsifal would be subject to the same temptations as normal men. If not, the central action of the drama is nullified. Wagner does not convince by the mere assumption that Parsifal is, in fact, sorely tempted, and the onus of proof rests upon him. Kundry, on the other hand, comes far nearer to the facts of life. Indeed, may we not see in her a partial self-portrait of her creator? While Wagner was, with all the sincerity of which a man of his temperament is always capable, indulging his idealism with the illusions of his mystical shrine of chastity, he was none the less engaged upon writing, in his best French, to a lady in Paris a number of letters, of which three pages consisted of passionate, if orthodox, protestations of love. The fourth page usually began, "And now to come to business . . ." and contained a series of requests that the lady would send to him certain scents, silks and satins. I do not drag out the old dressing-gown legend, as a reproach to Wagner's memory; rather I think these weaknesses make him the more lovable. So Kundry, the only oasis of humanity in this wilderness of asceticism and trumpery,

film-world vice, is torn, like any one of us, between good and evil, between high motives of spiritual service and the temptations of Klingsor's abode of love. Black magic has little real influence upon her actions; it is used only as a symbol of temptation which she cannot resist. In the scene of her evocation by Klingsor, his spell does not bind her. She fights against that, but gives way to the temptation of the approaching Parsifal, whom she had seen and loved in the previous act—a point which Miss Ancrum brought out by a very skilful and beautiful piece of acting. It may be added, in confirmation of this reading, for which there is no definite indication in the text, that immediately after Parsifal's appearance Kundry succumbs, though resisting, to "Klingsor's magic" and sinks into a trance, from which she awakens in the next act as Parsifal's temptress. It is the old allegory of Jekyll and Hyde in another form.

The subnormal temperature of the music in 'Parsifal,' which is to be attributed to the slackening pulse of life in the composer, does produce a tenderness and a calm beauty which are quite peculiar to it. The only parallel, which occurs to me, is the gentle music of Elgar's later years, where a similar refinement has taken place. But the intellect behind Elgar's music has not weakened; it has merely become more serene. In 'Parsifal' the queer combination, like the dual personality of Kundry herself, of beautiful texture with morbid material, makes it difficult to counterbalance dislike for the one with admiration of the other.

WE SHADOWS

By GEOFFREY DEARMER

THE constructive critic builds a pedestal on which to raise an artist to Heaven, the destructive critic raises a scaffold from which to drop a charlatan to earth. Each has his uses, but the critic in the throes of choice is inclined to forget that the office of public herald, or of conductor in the great orchestra of praise, is a higher office than that of public hangman.

Let the bird of loudest lay,
On the sole Arabian tree,
Herald sad and trumpet be,
To whose sound chaste wings obey.

This means, of course, let the nightingale combine the duties of herald and trumpeter. Throughout history heralds have never carried trumpets. A sixteenth-century herald, wearing his master's arms quartered on his breast, would send his trumpeter bearing an armorial trumpet banner to announce his impending arrival. This detail of criticism proves for the *n*th time Shakespeare's accuracy in objective poetry. But this incomparable and underrated dirge (which Professor Herford calls a trifle!) 'The Phoenix and the Turtle,' beautiful though it is with bird song, is, subjectively, of first importance. It may seem but a dirge for two young lovers; it is the heart of Shakespeare's whole philosophy and religion, a cry of insufficiency, a "vote of no confidence" in human art.

Shakespeare was one of the "several modern writers," as Robert Chester wrote in 1601, who "added some new composition" to a collection called 'Love's Martyr,' and this is his contribution. It is brilliant, over-informative, over-adjectived—very much the work of a young master revelling in his powers. But in the famous threne or threnody which echoes the poem as chorus to a dirge, talent bubbles over in genius. Suddenly the young poet kicks the aviary out of the boat and sets down in poetry that philosophy he finally echoed in the 'Tempest'—the great philosophy of the necessary failure of art:

Truth may seem, but cannot be;
Beauty brag but 'tis not she;
Truth and beauty buried be.

There is this and other evidence that Shakespeare hated over-praise and would have killed idolatry with ridicule. Not during his lifetime did his Globe be-

come the world. Shakespeare's theatre was an open house and a rough house. A house used to bear and bull-baiting for sport and food, for neither beast was thought tender unless it had died in public agony. The sun and rain beat down upon his wooden stage. His audiences were critical but not refined. They were usually too rough to include respectable women, and the wonder is not that Shakespeare is often coarse and crude, but that he is so often sublime. He weathered popularity and over-work. He became an over-ridden hack, yet the hounds of Heaven were for ever baying in his ears.

Our bard-idolaters will have none of this. They will not listen to the man when he cries, in the humility of his greatness, that his actors are all but spirits. Yet the above quotation was the young poet's first word and the great passage in the 'Tempest' his last. He did not cry "Qualis artifex pereo," but "We are such stuff as dreams are made on." We can estimate Shakespeare's success only in the light of failure. If we regard his girls as shadows, as essays in reverence—Rosalind for the forest, Perdita for the garden, Titania for fairies, Imogen for woman herself, they tremble on the verge of discovery, they float in the larger meaning of his voice. Indeed, Shakespeare's women live for ever largely because they could never have lived at all. He was at home in the Heavens. But may we not admit that certain of his historical characters are, to us, faintly ridiculous at times? We cannot but think that his noble Romans stab themselves to spite themselves with a childish I'll-kill-myself-and-then-you'll-be-sorry gesture. Even when they do survive, his Antonios are not quite convincing. They are so generous to the dead, so mean to the living. They stand above the slain and self-slain, like a mighty hunter with one foot upon the hippopotamus, and deliver the noblest, purplest patch of all. Are we to be treated as Goths and Philistines, because we feel inclined to shout "You can't die here, Sir, there isn't room," during the last moments of 'Julius Caesar'? May we not smile at the orgy of murder and suicide that follows Tamora's incursion into the crust of the human head pie at the close of 'Titus Andronicus'? Critics delight to honour "Shakespeare the man." A man as opposed to a poet to the professorial eye is often a man of action full of strange oaths, an adept at intentional offence. We are still waiting for Professor Saintsbury, Mr. Pollard, Sir Sidney Lee, or Mr. Frank Harris to give us an estimate of Shakespeare the gentleman.

'The Phoenix and the Turtle' contains possibly Shakespeare's most inspired utterance:—"Reason in itself confounded." Now the principle of the excluded middle means, roughly, that one can't be two beings—one must be either a hippopotamus or not a hippopotamus, either a man of action or a poet. Shakespeare confounded reason by being both doer and thinker. He was, potentially, the first and finest of English soldier-poets; and his present Elysian friends, one feels, are not so much other poets as other gentlemen. If he avoids Byron, Pope, and Congreve, one is tempted to suspect that he admires but does not cultivate Milton and Wordsworth. If Francis Thompson is found in the nurseries of Heaven, Shakespeare also mounts those celestial stairs and is frequently discovered playing bears or exchanging fairy badinage with that "honest man" Mamilius. One would invite Sir Christopher Wren, Nelson, Newman, Alfred the Great, Asoka, Brutus, Newton, Molière, or Michael Angelo, to meet him; not Alexander the Great, Napoleon, or, as a very rough classification, most of those whose first names are John, William, or George.

Idolatry is an unqualified acceptance of everything in the work idolized, but the greater the author of the work idolized the more he will feel inclined to ridicule the idolater. To idolize is to whitewash, and the logical end of idolatry is to become a vegetarian, because a butcher boy once fought Keats. Our bard-idolaters would put Shakespeare on a pedestal if he

were not already so warmly established in our hearts, for if we did not laugh at him when he fails we should not laugh and cry with him when he succeeds. If he is still our dramatist we are still his audience, and we cannot be tuned to his pitch unless we are stark of all delusion. Yet we can barely spare him for an hour, and when we read:

If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here,
While these visions did appear—

we begin to understand why.

SO THIS IS FAIRYLAND!

By IVOR BROWN

The Way of the World. By William Congreve. The Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

The Country Wife. By William Wycherley. Played by the Phoenix Society, Regent Theatre, Feb. 17 and 18.

"THEY are a world of themselves, almost as much as fairyland." Thus Lamb upon the sportive plays of the Restoration, adding: "A speculative scene of things, which has no reference whatever to the world that is." "A world which is a great deal too real," thundered Macaulay in response to Elia's little crackle of special pleading. "It is the morality, not of a chaotic people, but of low town-rakes and of those ladies whom the newspapers call 'dashing Cyprians.'" Of course Macaulay is right. Lamb's whimsy could only take in so gentle a soul as Lamb himself. Indeed, had Lamb looked only as far as Congreve's Epilogue to 'The Way of the World,' he would have found a plain protest against the marking down of living folk among his characters;

And though no perfect likeness they can trace,
Yet each pretends to know the copied face.

If Congreve's public went to the play-house to spy out neighbours on the stage, they were obviously under no illusions about taking trips to fairy-land or enjoying conducted tours to an ethereal Never-Never-Land. Lamb's "Utopia of Gallantry" turns out to be Lady Wishfort's drawing-room, and Lady Wishfort is—well, a very curious kind of fairy and odd specimen of Utopian breeding.

These Restoration dramatists were reporting the world in which they moved, and the only sense in which their work can merit its familiar title of "artificial" is that they embellished or exaggerated the dash of the Cyprians and the railery of the rakes. What we get is vicious idleness raised to its highest power of intellectual distinction: Mirabell and Millamant are not intellectuals of any broad or humane culture, but they do spread a lacquer of mental cunning over the empty boxes that are their hearts. They are poles apart from the clod-hoppers of concupiscence that clown it in the lower depths of the post-Shakespearean decline. If the Fainalls and the Horners think only on one subject, they do, at least, think hard, and there is something quite devastating about the capacity of a Congreve or a Wycherley to go on for hour after hour, finding something that is fresh and entertaining to say on a theme of which we have long ago become heartily weary. "The dullest of all subjects," says Shaw, of clandestine adultery. And so it is, particularly when no other subject is allowed even to show up on the horizon. On this rock of dullness founders ultimately the Restoration comedy, but who shall deny that the crew goes very handsome to destruction, drums beating and all flags flying?

My preference for Wycherley over Congreve is heterodox but not, I think, irrational. In the same way do I prefer Plautus to Terence, comic force to surface polish. 'The Way of the World' is the work of a lazy man. Its plot is mostly unintelligible, and, where intelligible, stupid. Congreve simply could not be bothered with the stone-breaking and brick-laying which every dramatist must face. (Shakespeare, it

is true, had a taste for ca' canny here.) He did not mind what his characters did so long as their wits were polished and their tongues were oiled. As a result, 'The Way of the World' drags, despite its brilliance, while 'The Country Wife' fairly gallops along, despite a monotony of jest, so desperate that one feels that one is going to shriek if the word "cuckold" crops up again. It does crop up again and a hundred times more, and one does not shriek. The reason is that Wycherley's vigorous invention and application to his fable keep the play moving while Congreve merely keeps tongues wagging.

The champions of Congreve can retort with a familiar quotation. "What the devil does the plot signify," wrote George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, "except to bring in fine things?" Well, Mirabell and Millamant are finery of rare quality, and the prose which their author has bestowed on them is almost unmatched in its poise and precision. Congreve was a master of that antithesis in which Greek speech so gloriously abounds; he had not the Greek particles "men" and "de" to help him, but he tuned his English with just that rise and fall which give Greek its noble and harmonious logic. Says Mirabell (I quote by chance as I open the book):

A fellow that lives in a windmill has not a more whimsical dwelling than the heart of a man that is lodged in a woman. There is no point of the compass to which they cannot turn and by which they are not turned; and by one as well as another; for motion, not method, is their occupation. To know this, and yet continue to be in love, is to be made wise from the dictates of reason, and yet persevere to play the fool by the force of instinct.

And so it rolls on. 'The Way of the World' is a Cynic's Symphony. Let the lines be well spoken and the delight of the ear atones for occasional weariness of the mind.

Mr. Loraine, at Hammersmith, is a model Mirabell. I note that his gravity of manner has been questioned. But surely that is all according to the book! "Sententious Mirabell," says Millamant. "Prithee don't look with that violent and inflexible wise face, like Solomon at the dividing of the child in an old tapestry hanging." Mr. Loraine was thus inflexible, and he winged his sentences with a sense of speech that is rare in the play-house nowadays. Miss Evans's Millamant was a match for this Mirabell, a jewel of railery. Miss Margaret Yarde turned Lady Wishfort from a squall into a typhoon. Indeed, the whole production aimed rather at garnishing and "gingering" Congreve's stately motion, and at times the ghost of 'The Beggar's Opera' seemed to be at large upon the stage. Mr. Playfair probably knows best what the Hammersmith public wants. Yet I confess I yawned when Millamant, Mirabell, and Lady Wishfort were away. But that, I think, was nobody's fault but the author's. There is something, after all, to be said for plots.

In the matter of plot you can cut and come again with Wycherley; there are two strands of story in 'The Country Wife,' one fundamentally lewd, the other only lewd according to the treatment it receives. Our dramatist, needless to say, sprinkles it with all the obscenity at his command, and none had a wider empire of indecency. Still, there is no humbug here. It is all as frank and open as the dung-hill in a farmyard and less pestilent for that reason than the bad drains of a modern farce on a similar topic, which has been given just as much fraudulent sanitation as will carry it through the Censor's office. Naturally, the play is fare for strong stomachs, but London's Sunday play-goers did not seem to be troubled by the labour of digestion. And these play-goers were certainly not assisted by any gentle faith that they were sojourning in fairyland or wandering, with Lamb, "in woody Ida's inmost grove."

The Phoenix Society's players handled their task with vigour and dispatch. Probably the piece is easier to attack than 'The Way of the World.'

There is a suggestion of hot blood in it, while Congreve's temperature remains at freezing point. The rakes are more robust, the Cyprians have more dash. Wycherley was at once more licentious and less literary: he was more of a play-house man. Mr. Balliol Holloway, as Horner, achieved an expressive *diablerie*, and Miss Athene Seyler turned My Lady Fidget into a radiant queen of the revels. Miss Isabel Jeans, as the country wife, interpreted with a fine subtlety and mischief the dawning knowledge of good and evil in that young hussy's head, and made the very most of the letter-writing scene where the comedy is admirable and inoffensive.

Correspondence

AMERICA AND THE FRENCH WEST INDIES

(FROM OUR FRENCH CORRESPONDENT)

WILL France make over Martinique and Guadeloupe to the United States in exchange for a remission of her debt to that country? A rumour to that effect was unexpectedly circulated in Paris a week or two ago, found its way to London, where it was featured on all the bulletins, and, almost immediately after, was contradicted both in Paris and Washington. It is noticeable that this undoubtedly startling piece of news originated in a dispatch to the French paper *Excelsior*, and it is hardly less remarkable that this dispatch appeared a few days after the return of Senator Paul Dupuy—the owner of both *Excelsior* and the *Petit Parisien*—from America. The *Petit Parisien* is a rather colourless morning paper, trying, like its rivals the *Petit Journal*, the *Matin*, and the *Journal*, to capture popular attention by the kind of news likeliest to accomplish that object. Its former political editor, M. Philippe Millet, a cousin of Mr. Hilaire Belloc, showed in another periodical, *l'Europe Nouvelle*, which he owned, semi-pacifist tendencies very different from those of Mr. Belloc, but did not dare to give them free play in the *Petit Parisien*. *Excelsior*, on the other hand, is a Nationalist paper, but conducted by a studiously moderate staff, and it is curious that it should have been the first to raise a rumour which was sure to seem extremely unpleasant to most of its readers.

As not a soul had breathed a word concerning this possible cession before the return of M. Paul Dupuy from America, it is difficult to resist the inference that the news was brought back from the United States by M. Paul Dupuy himself. On the other hand, M. Dupuy being one of the most agreeable people I ever met, and eminently what Americans call "a good mixer," it seems probable that the rumour was the consequence or, at all events, the echo of conversations which he had with American politicians. American politicians are never reticent, at all events about the kind of politics that does not concern them personally, and they love to challenge a man worth challenging on the latest issue that happens to come to their knowledge. Now the idea of suggesting to France that as she cannot pay America in cash, she might pay her in territories, is one which reappears in the United States at almost regular intervals. I was in Washington when Senator Medill McCormick first gave it publicity. Senator McCormick is a grave, youngish man, who tries to look more senatorial than he is by looking graver than he possibly may like. But he is the joint-owner of the *Chicago Tribune* and has the journalist's tendencies in his blood: whenever he sees a chance of producing a sensation he cannot make up his mind to let it escape. He professes to be a warm friend of France and once went to the trouble and expense of solemnly declaring his partiality in a cable to the *Matin* which must have cost him a little fortune. But that was at the very moment he was suggesting to the Senate that "as France had amazed

the world (at the Washington Naval Conference) by her militarism the American Senate would do wisely to send over a commission of experts to investigate how far the condition of French finances warranted her refusal to disarm." Shortly after, this same devoted friend was the first to launch the West Indies suggestion. It fell flat at the time, but in a few months it was taken up by one of the loudest Nationalists any country of old traditions and hereditary passions might show, Senator Borah of California, who every now and then reverts to it to the delight of the Hearst Press.

America, as is well known, is a country which can be for years indifferent to an idea but suddenly will grow enthusiastic over it and leave the rest of the world wondering why it did not wax enthusiastic from the first. It is a fact that most of the enlightened public in the East will always be opposed to the idea of pressing France in her extremity. It is also a fact that the vast majority of Americans do not understand the Monroe doctrine, and even when they happen to know how it was worded a hundred years ago, have not followed its rapid evolution into something that looks terribly like Imperialism during the past two or three decades. Pan-Americanism is a doctrine of politicians or financiers, not in the least a popular tendency. Even the controversy with Britain over the Panama Canal never became a popular issue except inasmuch as it appealed to anti-British sentiments, getting cooler every year. But indifference to the West Indies question may some day make room for interest. Let the usual methods of publicity be resorted to during a reasonable period and Congress first, then a larger and larger section of the Press, will see the possibilities of such a platform, and public opinion will follow. There is not the least doubt that when this result is arrived at, the American man in the street will only view the suggestion as an ordinary transaction between creditor and debtor. For to him the West Indies are little else than real estate on a large scale, plus a negro population which is sure to give the usual amount of trouble, as it does at present in Haiti, but need not be regarded as a problem. Only intelligent people in Washington, New York or Boston will know that Martinique and Guadeloupe are something else and will act accordingly.

To the French the West Indies, represented in the Chamber though they be by coloured men of exceptional intelligence, M. Lémery and, above all, M. Candace, whom all his colleagues deeply respect, are not negro territories. They are the home of ancient French families which the word *creoles* describes with many shades of affection, and even admiration, not connoted in the same word as used in the English language. The charm of the women and the intelligent loyalty of the men in those islands are known to even French school-boys and girls. Two hundred and fifty years ago, the fascinating girl who was to become Madame de Maintenon, summed up as *La Belle Indienne* the characteristics of the inhabitants of those settlements. Nothing has been changed in the ideas of the French since those days. There is little doubt that the notion of giving up Indo-China or Madagascar would seem less difficult to receive public consent. Perhaps when Americans realize this they will be less inclined to listen to a suggestion which to many of them is likely to appear simplicity itself.

Another aspect of the question will not fail to strike them. Every time the French islands are mentioned, Jamaica is mentioned too. It was distinctly stated in the *Excelsior* dispatch that Washington would suggest to the British Government that Jamaica might be ceded to the United States against a sum corresponding to the debt owed by France to England. In fact the West Indies could only escape being a nest of difficulties between America and Britain by being transferred to the United States as a whole. This creates a complication which no doubt will be considered in Washington.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ, No. 87

THE RT. HON. THOMAS SHAW, M.P.

MINISTER OF LABOUR

By 'Quiz'

Letters to the Editor

¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

¶ Letters which are of reasonable brevity, and are signed with the writer's name, are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

ANTHONY TROLLOPE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In your recent interesting article on Trollope, the writer omits all allusion to the delightful humour which pervades nearly all his work. There is no occasion, of course, to indicate the more conspicuous and familiar examples of it. In regard to his experience of clerical life, it used always to be said in Salisbury that he had paid periodical visits to a friend in the Cathedral set, whose name I forget. But there is no doubt where he got his knowledge and love of horseflesh, seeing that so many of his "Post-office" years were spent in Ireland, and those, too, in riding on official business through the country, where the horse, ever and always, was the chief topic of conversation and interest. If Trollope could grasp, as he did, the details and atmosphere of clerical and country life in England with such comparatively small opportunities, how valuable should his pictures be of a countryside he knew as long and intimately as he did Ireland. Curiously enough his two Irish novels—his first books, which fell flat, as the subject was then taboo—scarcely touched those indigenous humours which have been the stock-in-trade of nearly all writers on the subject. The tragic, sombre and sordid side of it seems to have gripped him. "The Macdermotts of Ballycloran" is the grimmest and saddest story I ever read in my life. But its realism would, I think, impress the reader, even if he were unaware of how the author's career had soaked him in the actualities of the country and period. For those not sick of the very name of Ireland, I doubt if any better and more vivid account of Southern Ireland in the 'forties and into the Famine years has ever been written.

But returning to the Barchester series, in which that delightful "Vicar of Bullhampton," as laid in Wiltshire, should be included—a great comfort in Trollope is the perfect poise of all his characters, the easy certainty with which he draws them true to type, with the slight caricature that only emphasizes the portrait. It is not merely the clergy, but the big landowners, the small squires, the farmers, and country attorneys correspond to their labels in their attitude, speech and actions. They are *real*. They are not the "rather stagey" characters we meet in most modern novels by men or women, particularly the latter, who deal with a side of life to which they usually do not belong. Many novels regarded in Kensington and Chelsea as miraculous interpretations of rustic life in Blankshire are full of "howlers" in detail and social misconceptions. These do not affect the "artistry" of the "creation," perhaps. But they are significant as suggesting a lack of intimacy with the stage on which the author has placed his characters and jar badly. Trollope never perpetrated "howlers"!

I am, etc.,

"SUSSEX"

P.S.—In the year '83 I read the Autobiography, then just out, while staying in Bruges, where Trollope's father, brother and sister (I think) died and were buried. I visited the cemetery, and with some difficulty found the inscribed tombstones—one was broken in half, the other injured—all overgrown and uncared for. An elderly English clergyman who had lived in Bruges for about fifty years showed me the house where the

Trollopes had lived and some died—Anthony had gone out into the world. But my informant used to visit the father towards the end and described to me Mrs. Trollope working away at her books by the bedside to keep the wolf from the door.

CONSERVATISM AND YOUTH

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. Baldwin's observations upon social reform and encouragement of younger men, if acted upon, will secure the support of those members of the party who have long been connected with social work. It is to be hoped that something will be done by the leaders to enlist their aid in formulating a policy based on practical knowledge. Without in any way interfering, the example of both the Labour and Liberal Parties in accumulating experience could be followed, as, after all, local associations who are in contact with the electorate can contribute towards a social policy.

One regrets that suggestions from those within the party upon organization, even if they come from youth, are not welcomed. We have large numbers of delegates called together, but the platform—like the front bench—occupies most of the time and the private member is unable to speak. Does this attitude lead to efficiency and strengthening our cause?

In regard, Sir, to attracting young men, one hopes that the field will not be too confined to highbrow lawyers, or intellectual university men, or even ex-candidates, whose only experience is theoretical or a short stay at a university settlement—often a Labour college in reality. Personality, psychology, actual accessibility, and experience of quieter public work, also moving in a wider circle, without being necessarily a lawyer or a university man, are greater assets for candidates either for the L.C.C. or Parliament. Many who serve on public bodies, before they were elected never followed proceedings or attended as visitors. To educate all sections we should not be too restricted in our various debating clubs, as the would-be aspirant can learn from those who have laboured in the field of social service.

How is one to gain the allegiance of young men or the working classes if to your deliberations the door is closed to those who have something to contribute?

Take, for example, the record of the present Under-Secretary for War, at one time a keen Tariff Reformer, a young man, energetic, clever, graduated quickly to public offices—mostly by way of co-option, because he possessed the ability, the enthusiasm, the temperament for public duties. Labour recognizes talent. He also lived on the spot. We have Conservatives actually trying to do the same thing; but are they encouraged in their desire to do their best for the party?

If we are to succeed in winning youth, let youth (backed up by age, not merely as a gesture but for a definite object) lead youth.

If one entered the portals of Eccleston Square, he would probably find younger persons, and imagination, also keenness, diverted to useful channels.

I am, etc.,

St. James's

"GALLORIDIAN"

GERMANY AND OUR DYES

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In justice to our dyestuffs industry it is only fair that certain facts should be made known regarding the discussions now being carried on between the German dyemakers and the British Dyestuffs Corporation, Ltd. There appears to be a widespread belief that approaches were first made from Great Britain, whereas the facts are precisely the other way about. It was after an invitation sent through a diplomatic channel to this country from Germany that the first meeting took place in Paris just before Christmas,

1921. The chief German representative at this conference was Herr Carl von Weinberg, chairman of the German Cartel's central committee, who then discussed with Sir William Alexander, chairman of the British Dyestuffs Corporation, Ltd., the new situation which had clearly arisen from our success in meeting out of our own resources the dyes demanded during the textile boom that followed the Armistice.

From that day, three years ago, until now, Sir William Alexander has met the German advances with a characteristic clearness of head. Together with Lord Ashfield and a permanent official from the Board of Trade, he attended the next discussion, which took place in Berlin during March, 1922, and both then and subsequently he has been firm in insisting that never again must this country be in a position of dependence upon others, as it was in 1914, not for dyestuffs only but for those derivatives from them which are essential to modern warfare. Since those earlier negotiations, the prestige of British dyes has improved to such a point that all save men blind with bias agree that any dyestuffs "surrender" has been on the German side. Are not these German overtures, in fact, the prettiest imaginable compliment to the position won by British dyemakers?

I am, etc.,

Cowley Street, S.W.

HARRY BRITAIN

SOME SOBER VIEWS ON DRINK

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In your article entitled, 'Some Sober Views on Drink,' you tell us that Prohibition would mean a violent invasion of personal freedom. I should like to point out that Prohibition does not deal with the individual but with a traffic, and surely you would not deny the State the right to prohibit a traffic which becomes injurious to the community? You then tell us how the law would be broken. Well, Sir, I should like to ask what law has not been broken? Surely you would not go so far as to advocate the abolition of laws because they are broken. You also tell us it might lead to drug taking. It has not in America, why should it here? Finally you tell us you are opposed to Prohibition because you believe wine and beer to be wholesome and valuable food when taken in reasonable quantities. I should like to point out that there is more food value in a pennyworth of bread than in ten-pennyworth of beer, therefore it would be cheaper to buy bread instead of beer for food value, and also you would miss the poisonous drug action of alcohol. In conclusion, I think if we thoroughly look into the drink problem we shall find the only effective solution will be prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes.

I am, etc.,

A. N. BRANSOM,

Hon. General Secretary of the East and Mid Surrey Prohibition Campaign, International Order of Good Templars.

Clapham, S.W.21

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—A thoroughly sane, balanced article, this, in your columns last week. The letters you have published so impartially, for some weeks past, show that your readers all over the country take a lively interest in this question, and intend to preserve their personal liberties against such infringements as Local Option and Prohibition.

Public opinion and a greater self-respect are banishing drunkenness. When we improve the status of the public-house and make it a resort for recreation for decent people, as on the Continent, drunkenness will not be tolerated. Pussyfoot tactics and legislation will never make a sober England. Local Options are an unseemly joke and will continue, I hope, to get no further than a second reading in the House. As for State control, did not the State pay £20 this last

week to recover 1s. 5½d. from a little boys' football club? Why should the taxpayer give the State anything else to muddle? Your 'Sober Views' are most temperate and moderate, and much appreciated by at least one reader.

I am, etc.,

WM. E. THOMAS

Sanctuary Buildings, S.W.1

LOCAL OPTION AND PROHIBITION

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—If Mr. Curtis will read my letter in reply to Mr. Pace in your issue of February 2, he will see that his inquiry is answered. But since that letter appeared, testimony confirming the success of the Carlisle scheme is supplied by the Chief Constable's report to the Licensing Magistrates at the Annual Licensing Sessions. Analysing the convictions for 1923 (89 or 1.67 per 1,000 of the population) as compared with those for 1914 (275 or 5.26 per 1,000) and showing that of these 89, 26 were strangers and that nine of the convictions were against two women, he stated:

Only 49 residents were proceeded against, and I consider this very satisfactory, and have no hesitation in saying that the general conduct in the streets of the city continues to show a marked improvement.

The Carlisle Journal says:

This is an official judgment which nobody who wishes to arrive at a sound conclusion on the subject will seek to minimize. The police are in the best position to form an opinion on this question and have no conceivable motive to support a system which was a failure. It is, and always has been, a significant feature of the controversy on the subject that those who have been the bitterest assailants of the "Experiment" have been strangers who hold strong prepossessions on licensing or temperance policy and who have little knowledge of the actual local conditions, while the Advisory Committee, which consists of well-known and representative local men, are firmly convinced that the results justify the maintenance of the system. Those who can compare the actual conditions to-day with those which existed ten years ago cannot fail to see the improvement which has been effected in the public-houses themselves and in the state of the streets, whatever the advocates of "the trade" or the fanatical advocates of prohibition may say in depreciation of any form of State control.

I am, etc.,

FRED CARTER

The Abbey House, Westminster

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Mr. J. Douglas Edwards quotes the views of the Leeds Licensing Bench in support of his case. I have always admitted that certain justices were more favourably disposed to public-house improvements, and in many instances gave their support to the Bill of that name. Although many more are nowadays following that lead, it is an accepted fact that some years ago too many of the Benches always looked with suspicion on any attempts at improvement. This is the reason why we are so far behind at present, and only time and the necessary encouragement is the remedy.

I am, etc.,

J. ANDERSON

Kensington

'STREETS OF NIGHT'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—In your last issue, Mr. Gerald Gould, reviewing Mr. John Dos Passos's 'Streets of Night,' calls that novel "apparently a first book."

Whether or not the correcting of this statement would lead him—I judge from the tenor of his review—to adopt less leniency towards his subject, I do not know. But late in 1921 Mr. John Dos Passos published his first novel, 'Three Soldiers,' a post-war book of unusual vigour and skill. Since then he has also published a volume on modern Spain, called 'Rosinante to the Road Again.'

I am, etc.,

WILLIAM REITZEL

New College, Oxford

Reviews

THE PORTRAIT OF A FRIEND

W. H. Hudson. By Morley Roberts. Nash and Grayson. 16s. net.

"WHY is it," Mr. Roberts asked in one of his conversations with Hudson, "that critics will never treat a book for what it is, but always ask for something else?" Perhaps Mr. Roberts owes his evident suffering from this peculiarly annoying kind of criticism to his versatility. It is not every reader that has a sufficiently catholic taste to be equally delighted by 'The Western Avernus' and 'Salt of the Sea'; books which we consider to have as good a chance of enduring life, in their respective styles, as anything written in this country within the last forty years. In his new work Mr. Roberts has devoted his remarkable power of describing what he sees with simple and almost childlike directness to the task of portraying his old friend W. H. Hudson, an "inheritor of unfulfilled renown" who is only now coming into his own. It has evidently been a labour of love, and we are grateful to Mr. Roberts for so striking a presentation of a singular individuality. The author of 'The Purple Land' and 'Green Mansions' was even more interesting than his books, and it is probable that no one alive knew him so well as Mr. Roberts, though even to him Hudson was in many ways a mystery—"a jester, and so serious: so fierce a critic and so ardent for his friends: so savage and so gentle: a caged hawk and a reed-bunting singing by a river!" Mr. Roberts has wisely avoided any attempt to produce a formal biography, for which, indeed, Hudson's uneventful life in England gave little justification. He has concentrated his attention on the effort to produce a living portrait of the man himself, and in this task he has been so successful as to leave nothing worth doing for the courageous person who may, as he suggests, one day "essay a complete biography." We really cannot see what more is needed than we have here, unless it be that collection of Hudson's letters which Mr. Roberts tells us that he has in preparation, and which, in conjunction with the present volume, should supply all that the greatest admirer of Hudson can possibly want to know about him.

Hudson used to say himself that his life really came to an end when he left the Argentine at the age of twenty-nine, after the weirdly adventurous experiences that furnished the material, alembicated in the furnace of his heated spirit, for nearly all his books. The fifty years that he spent in London, during most of which Mr. Roberts was one of his closest friends, "had no story" in the objective sense. More than once Mr. Roberts recurs to the metaphor of the caged bird, which must indeed naturally occur to any reader of this book. It is painful to think of one who was so essentially an out-of-doors man, dragging out a cloistered and rather sordid existence on the top floor of a dingy house in the midst of London, and Hudson's passionate hatred of all those who cage or chain birds must have been in some sense a reflection from his own sufferings. He lived in memory, and found a kindred spirit in Mr. Roberts.

As all who have been born in, or have at last been subdued to, the fascination of great plains, greatly love them, so the reviving memory of his own open spaces delighted him. He spoke of long rides by night, and how, when galloping, he sometimes lay back with his head almost on the horse's crupper and stared upwards into the starry southern sky, feeling divorced from earth and translated into a new ethereal world, while still his horse carried him into dim wastes far from home.

It was this power of mental detachment which alone enabled him to live so long in Westbourne Park, and from which was born the charm that so

many readers, also cribbed and cabined within city walls, undeniably find in his books. He was essentially what anthropologists call "a Beaker man," one of those powerful men with round skulls and big noses found in British barrows with drinking beakers laid beside them for use in the next world, who were born to be conquerors and masters of others. It was only in his early years in South America, and in his writings, that this dominant power found its outlet. The caging of such a type in a London boarding house was a spiritual tragedy, which lends poignancy to Mr. Roberts's vivid and fascinating essay in biographical portraiture.

THE BAGHDAD RAILWAY

Turkey, the Great Powers, and the Bagdad Railway. By Edward Meade Earle. Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.

AT present public interest in the Baghdad Railway is slight, but it may be expected to revive when the question of Mosul comes up again for general consideration, and that must be very soon, for at this moment negotiations regarding that area are proceeding in London between the British and Turkish Governments. The railway that traverses Asia Minor from the Bosphorus to Mesopotamia will always have a high strategical and political importance as well as a great commercial value, for it links Europe with Syria, Palestine, and indeed the whole Middle East. Its significance for French, and particularly for British, policy is at once apparent. The struggle for its control, if not for its actual possession, was one of the underlying causes of the Great War; the war itself showed how potent for good or ill the railway was from the military point of view. The sub-title of Professor Earle's book is 'A Study in Imperialism,' and in the main he considers and develops his subject as an unfolding of the conflict for the road, a conflict in which Germany, Russia and Britain, with France never quite out of the picture, took part, because of the "Imperialism" of those Powers. He is certainly not enamoured of Imperialism, but he is fair-minded and well-informed enough to admit that it was—and is—the almost inevitable outcome of the relentless economic pressure of our age—a conflict not necessarily for conquest but at bottom for subsistence, for life.

Since the war, a considerable number of books on historical and political matters have been published which are very elaborately documented, but we doubt whether any of them have been so thoroughly documented as this work, every page of which bears witness to the prodigious industry of its author in research. When he could not get information from print, he went for light to such actors in the drama as Herr von Gwinner, of the Deutsche Bank and President of the Anatolian and Baghdad Railway Companies, Dr. Helfferich, managing director of the Deutsche Bank, Sir Henry Babington Smith, Djavid Bey, the Turkish economic expert at the Lausanne Conference, and others, including Rear-Admiral Chester of the "Chester concessions." But Professor Earle seems to have missed nothing in books, magazines, or newspapers that bore on his subject, and their number is simply enormous, for there was no more live topic for a good many years than the Baghdad Railway. The collection, collation and assimilation of this immense mass of material implies a colossal effort, to which we willingly pay tribute. We get the benefit of his investigations in the text. The references to authorities and sources of quotation, however, are given at the end of each chapter—sometimes there are several pages of them—in small type. To turn to them, as one must constantly do, involves some labour and loss of time, which might have been avoided if they had been given as footnotes in the usual way. This, of course, is a criticism of the arrangement of

the matter and not of the matter itself, which throughout is presented with marked ability and success.

Dr. Earle is Assistant Professor of History in Columbia University, and his point of view is that of an American, but of an American conscious, as he tells us in the Preface of his book, of the rapid development of American activity in the Near East. The attitude of the United States is not so detached as it was, for its Big Business interests have entered this field, as is exemplified by the Chester concessions in Anatolia and the Anglo-American controversy over the oil fields of Mesopotamia. As Professor Earle puts it:

Turkey, already an important market for American goods, gives promise of becoming a valuable source of raw materials for American factories and a fertile field for the investment of American capital. . . . Political stability and economic progress in Turkey no longer are matters of indifference to business men and politicians in the United States; therefore the Eastern Question—so often a cause of war—assumes a new importance to Americans.

It is just Professor Earle's appreciation of these facts that causes him to see the real meaning of Imperialism in the hard and strenuous times in which we live. It certainly is a standpoint which has not yet been reached by the average American, and primarily this book is written for the purpose of opening his eyes. But it has also a value for English readers, not only because it tells the story so far of the Baghdad Railway extremely well, but because it has a moral for England and the Empire in these days of fierce economic competition.

A KING'S FRIEND

William Bentinck and William III. By Marion E. Grew. Murray. 21s. net.

MRS. GREW has chosen a most interesting subject and has handled it with great skill. The cream, indeed, was skimmed off it by Macaulay; but we are sometimes told that the present generation of readers have not discovered that Macaulay's history is much more interesting than the average novel. In that case Mrs. Grew will have a clear field, and even those who know their Macaulay well will be grateful for this expansion of his account of "a friendship as warm and pure as any that ancient or modern history records." There is no existing ducal house which can trace its origin to a more truly creditable founder than that of Portland. In placing at Mrs. Grew's disposal the intimate correspondence between William Bentinck and William III, still preserved at Welbeck Abbey, the present Duke has done a good service to his worthy ancestor, whose fame has hitherto been overshadowed by that of his great master, the founder of our modern constitutional monarchy. Bentinck himself would probably have been quite content that it should be so. The dominating passion of his life was his unrestrained admiration and faithful friendship for the Prince of Orange, whose household he entered when he was about twelve years old. Sir William Temple gave him the character of "the best servant I have ever known in Prince's or private family." Every reader of Macaulay remembers the devotion with which young Bentinck nursed the Prince through that attack of small-pox in 1675, which was so near changing the destinies of England and the world—for without William's guiding hand our Revolution would scarcely have developed as it did on the lines that contained within them the germs of our future Empire. "Whether Bentinck slept or not while I was ill," said William to Temple with great tenderness, "I cannot tell. But this I know, that, in sixteen days and nights, I never called once that I was not answered by Bentinck as if he was awake." Mrs. Grew adds a family tradition to the effect that Bentinck carried his devotion to the extent of sleeping in the same bed with the Prince, "in accordance with the current belief that any person who caught small-pox directly from a patient caused the virulence of the attack to diminish in the first instance." Greater

love hath no man than this—and Bentinck, who actually caught the disease, did very nearly lay down his life for his master. What could be a better refutation of the scandalous report set afoot by some scurril pamphleteer in later years, that Portland restrained his master from battle because he must have attended him and might have been killed?

To an autocratic ruler, who was—like Mr. Ramsay MacDonald—his own Foreign Minister, there could probably be no greater blessing than to have a man about his person who was so utterly devoted to him that no temptation could possibly corrupt his fidelity or impair his secrecy. A great part of Mrs. Grew's book describes the various confidential missions on which William accordingly employed Bentinck—who was not merely incorruptible, but a very good man of business, public or private. It is in the detailed account of these missions that she has employed most of the new material with which she has been able to supplement Macaulay. Apart from their historical value, they help to give the reader a vivid impression of the life of the latter part of the seventeenth century, notably in the account of the Paris Embassy of 1698. Mrs. Grew also explains very clearly the reasons of Bentinck's unpopularity with the English aristocracy of the day, who regarded him as a foreign favourite and an interloper. Mrs. Grew points out that they had a show of reason for their indignation; but the real fact was that William was justified in trusting hardly any of them, whereas Bentinck he trusted implicitly; the corruption of the Stuart rule had reduced the honesty of English statesmen to pretty nearly its lowest ebb. Thus "Bentinck actually occupied the position of a Minister above Ministers, and, still more galling to the national pride, access to the King was almost impossible except through the medium of this watch-dog, impregnable, incorruptible, unbending and secretly contemptuous and resentful." Bentinck's material reward was fairly considerable. An interesting inventory of his English possessions alone at his death estimates their value at £850,000 sterling, equivalent to at least five millions to-day. No wonder that some of those whom Charles II had delighted to honour grumbled! But the verdict of history is that no King's servant ever earned his honours and rewards better than the first Earl of Portland.

EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURE

Everyday Architecture. By Manning Robertson. With an introduction by H. R. Selby. Illustrated. Fisher Unwin. 8s. 6d. net.

PERHAPS an architect would applaud this book more loudly than a layman, but then it was not written for architects. The writer, who is no less a layman for being interested in the subject, admires the title, the aim, and even parts of the achievement of this book, but finds it a failure as a whole. First of all, it is not a book save in appearance. It is a collection of articles from periodicals, with additions, made to bear a resemblance of unity by being addressed to the public, and by having a main theme dealing with practical domestic architecture. The main theme is not developed to its fullest—the somewhat irrelevant study of Wren's work has, for instance, been given an awkward twist to bear out the continuous idea. Now, if they were ten times more skilfully bound together than here, these essays would never adequately present the subject with which they treat; a more systematic conception is an essential for clear exposition of so large a subject as architecture. But, as they are, they will fall to pieces even before the unsubstantially manufactured book itself. The reviewer leaves even its most interesting parts with the knowledge that this is not a very important book, and is sorry, because its aims are important, and there is an important opportunity for their fulfilment.

What Mr Robertson sets out to do is virtually to interest the public in other sides of the housing ques-

tion than occur to the minds of news-writers. Houses have not only a political and economical significance; their practical, their sociological, and their artistic aspects are those which Mr. Robertson seeks to turn towards the public. He desires to foster the ideal that architecture is every man's business every day, and not that of specialists on special days. When he speaks practically of planning, materials, costs, health, fire precautions, lighting, by-laws, even when he divides the functions of architect, builder, and public (or composer, performer, and listener), he is admirably clear and sensible, keeping his technical medicine sweet with a coating of interest. It is when he has little medicine to keep sweet that his inspiration begins to flag.

There is an interesting absence of artistic discussion which, it must be confessed, is not surprising in an architect, though it ought to be. Mr. Robertson clearly has the right ideas about good workmanship in good, plain materials, and their importance as a basis for the beautiful. He knows, too, why the Victorians were bad architects, and he knows all about the relative artistic values of the adorned, the simple, and the box-like cottage types. Again, he knows how districts must affect design and how architecture is a part of history. But it is with the practical view of architecture and its derivatives that he deals exclusively, and there are tantalizing suggestions here and there about the birth of form by practice out of simplicity which vanish as soon as form utters its first cry. Of form as form, of the principle of beauty in domestic architecture, of the basis of proportions, of masses, he does not speak (except by bare mention in an underline to one of the pictures). Architecture suffers all along the line from being either an historical study or a practical craft; it is never an art, and as an art—particularly as a modern art—it is never discussed. Mr. Robertson has shown the way; it is now proper for someone else to write the book which one believes he had in mind, a book which will really tell the public about the modern houses they live in—the houses themselves, both artistically and practically, their relations in towns and villages, and their importance in politics and economics.

TALES OF DEVON

My Native Devon. By the Hon. John W. Fortescue. Macmillan. 10s. 6d. net.

THE activity of Devonian and Cornish pens, in celebrating their native heaths, has been so persistent for a generation or two that South Country outsiders, particularly Londoners, have been fairly hypnotized. Being usually greater explorers of foreign parts than their own island, they have been driven into accepting a convention, that nowhere else in England and even Wales are there such wonderful hills, such wild and perilous wastes, such pellucid streams, such bowery villages and such alluring rustics—all of which is, of course, slightly ridiculous. But Mr. Fortescue does not gush on this top note of exaggeration. Yet no one, either by birth or association, or literary accomplishment, is better qualified to deal with his delectable native county. And he has done so in a series of charming sketches, in so far as they concern the days of his own youth at Castlehill. But why the slight mystery thrown over the familiar place-names by pseudonyms, I do not know, seeing that his own gives them all away! Prominent in these recollections is an artful, poaching, but to them devoted miller, who initiates the numerous Fortescue boys into every kind of sport, legal and otherwise. Under his auspices on one memorable occasion, they "snatch" a salmon in the adjacent Bray. There is a thrilling struggle with it when attached to a rod and line, while "His Lordship," a great stickler for the fishery laws, is hovering about in perilous propinquity to the criminals. The great man, however, thoroughly enjoys the fish at dinner and all the more for the

interest attaching to a salmon caught with a fly in his own little river, an unprecedented occurrence, while the delighted boys kick each other under the table.

'The Family Butler' is perhaps the best sketch among many good ones; sixty years in its service, a genius in every branch of his calling, whether in town or country. Out-of-doors a sportsman, and above all a life-long friend of the family—in short, a noble specimen of an extinct breed. The author's first big run as a boy with the stag hounds is recounted and with the spirit one would look for. We are also introduced to a fussy, self-important major and quite inadequate master of harriers, for whom they surreptitiously lay a drag—an excellent story. Mr. Fortescue has the hardihood to state the naked truth that North Devon, off the moors, and he might have added South Devon (Exmoor is mainly in Somerset), is the worst hunting country in England. A network of small fields, enclosed by high un-jumpable banks, planted with timber. He alludes to a common practice I have seen myself as a boy hunting in this country, namely, that of riders who, when no gate is handy, jump from their clever little horses, send them with a cut of the whip scrambling over a fence and, following suit themselves, re-mount on the other side.

The church choir and their archaic hymns are lovingly recalled; two fiddles, a bass-viol, a flute and flageolet made the music, while at the foot of the "three decker" sat a clerk up to the glorious standard of his day. But at Challacombe, a remote parish on "His Lordship's" property, there was the greatest clerk of all time or any country. With his three grown-up sons and two flutes he formed both choir and orchestra to an awe-struck and mute congregation for years. Those who confronted him habitually from the Rectory pew (and knew him) held him as a precious memory for life. The casual visitor never forgot the agony of his first attendance, for the spectacle and the procedure were too much for even the gravest soul. But his reign was about over by Mr. Fortescue's day. The present writer still revels in his memory.

There is much else in this pleasant little volume, which in essence deals with the sad passing of an epoch. For the close of the 'seventies, as the author justly says, terminated for ever the spacious, easy, confident old rural life of England. 1879 is one of the great landmarks in English history. How few in this urbanized country realize it!

THE SCIENCE OF THE OCEAN

An Introduction to Oceanography. By James Johnstone. University Press of Liverpool, and Hodder and Stoughton. 15s. net.

HOMER spoke of Ocean as the progenitor of the gods, Virgil as the creator of the universe. Professor Johnstone has not any such simple and sweeping hypothesis to offer us, but he knows a great deal more about the physical phenomena of the ocean than his predecessors. The science of oceanography, as he justly says, has been developed to such an extent during the last twenty-five years that it is "impossible to deal comprehensively with its results in a book of any reasonable size." This is true enough in so far as the mass of descriptive detail which has been accumulated by patient investigators is concerned, but the general principles are adequately set forth in this lucid and learned outline. Dr. Johnstone holds a middle course between the domains of geography and geology on the one hand and of marine biology on the other. He explains the theories as to the origin of the oceans, the shape and nature of their bottoms and margins, the chemistry and physical characteristics of sea-water, the tides and the oceanic circulation. His admirable compendium of the physical side of oceanography may be confidently recommended to students,

and will prove especially useful to biologists who want a convenient summary of the facts with which he deals as a help in their own work. The general reader will note with interest that there are "certainly thousands of millions of tons of gold in solution" in the water of the seven seas," besides a quantity of radium which is conservatively estimated as a minimum of 1,400 tons. As even the gold is present in such minute traces that the various tempting schemes for extracting it have all proved hopelessly inadequate, this gives the reader some vague notion of the immense size of the ocean.

A MODERN MISSIONARY

In Primitive New Guinea. By J. H. Holmes.
Seeley Service. 21s. net.

THE generation must be rapidly disappearing which still remembers the thrill of the stories of missionary enterprise of the great missionary age. It was an age which lasted into the second half of the nineteenth century. It was satirized by Dickens and Thackeray and made farcical by Gilbert and Sullivan, and the living appeal of it has passed away for ever. Yet there are still some of us who remember the emotion which pervaded the Exeter Hall audiences or the churches on Missionary Sunday when the hymn directed our thoughts to Greenland's icy mountains and India's coral strand, and when the address or sermon drew the appalling picture of the benighted heathen peopling hell through pure ignorance of the way of salvation. We remember, too, the missionary-box which stood on the nursery mantelshelf during the week and was passed round the breakfast table on Sunday morning. And then, the church missionary stories of those days! How they made us long to tell the simple-minded negroes of their wickedness in worshipping wooden idols! No difficult theology worried us, no embarrassment like that of Robinson Crusoe when he could not satisfy Friday with any sufficient reason why God did not kill the devil. It is curious to look back on the origins of missionary enterprise and compare the very different work and very different ideals of the present-day missionary as revealed in this most interesting account of primitive New Guinea.

Mr. Holmes has lived as a missionary for thirty years in probably the only part of the world in which there still exist really primitive people, tribes which to all intents and purposes are a direct survival of the stone age, and this book is a record of his observations. Only incidentally does it touch on his work for the Church Missionary Society. We are left to infer from his descriptions what were his peculiar difficulties and the nature of his success in overcoming them. He appears, however, to have decided his method from the first, and it was, not to interfere with tribal customs, but to endeavour to assist the people he had to deal with to work out their own salvation. He has given us a book fascinating in its interest for the anthropologist and affording much food for reflection to the philosopher and psychologist.

The primitive tribes among which he worked fall into two distinctive groups, one monogamist the other polygamist, in each of which the sanctions and conventions are as rigid and unalterable as in the most advanced civilization. The once widespread idea that primitive races are ingenuous and simple-minded has completely given way before anthropological research. The customs of a primitive race of men are no more based on a natural reason than the distinctive conventions of European peoples are the outcome of reflective reason. In both cases the origins are in unreason, and are lost in the remote past. Take an example. Mr. Holmes tells us that the tribes of Papua remove the hair from every part of their body except the scalp, which is treated in a peculiarly painful manner, from their legs and arms and wherever else hair

grows, and they remove it not by the oyster shell or broken glass which serves as a razor, but by twisting each single hair into a piece of cleft cane and jerking it out. Can we help asking ourselves whether this apparently harmful and certainly useless custom is any more irrational than the task civilized men impose on themselves of immaculately removing daily the hirsute growth on their faces? It was Byron, struck with the strangeness of the convention, who humorously suggested that the daily duty of shaving imposed by nature on man counterbalanced the duty of child-bearing imposed on woman.

Mr. Holmes gives an account of a cannibal feast with all its terrible features. It was under anxious circumstances, for it was because he was at the time a captive that he was able to witness it, and it must have seemed to him unlikely that he would escape the fate of his predecessor, James Chalmers, who was a victim. The account is deeply interesting because the writer treats with genuine sympathy the religious significance of the custom and makes the details throw light on its origin and on the animistic ideas to which it gives expression. In this particular case the victims were enemies killed in war and the feast was the consummation of victory. Only the actual or potential warriors of the tribe partook of the feast; women and children joined in the frenzy and served in various ways, but might not eat the flesh. As we read the story and feel the horror of it, can we help reflecting on the origin of our own religious beliefs, and the significance to us of the sacramental bread and wine? Truly are we all of one kin.

THE EINSTEIN THEORY

The Theory of Relativity. By Erwin Freundlich. Methuen. 5s. net.

The Foundations of Einstein's Theory of Gravitation. By Erwin Freundlich. Methuen. 6s. net.

PROFESSOR FREUNDLICH, of the Astrophysical Observatory at Potsdam, is one of the most brilliant of Dr. Einstein's younger astronomical adherents in Germany. Mr. H. L. Brose, whose attention was first called to the Einstein theory during his enforced leisure as a civilian prisoner in Germany, has done useful work in translating Dr. Freundlich's latest attempt to explain this very recondite and difficult subject in three lectures for chemists under the title of 'The Theory of Relativity,' along with which is re-issued Mr. Brose's translation of an earlier work by the same author, which was first published by the Cambridge University Press in 1920. Lord Haldane, who contributes a brief but interesting introduction to the new volume, observes that the great value of these three lectures "as a means of making the theory of relativity in physics intelligible to the general reader" consists in their giving prominence to two features—the finite and limiting velocity of light as a physical constant, and the equality of inertial and gravitational energy. Lord Haldane, though he acknowledges that he is no mathematician, is not precisely a type of the general reader, and we rather doubt whether these volumes will prove to be easily comprehended by such as have not already a fair knowledge of the most recent developments in physics. To the latter class, however, they will certainly be very helpful. Perhaps the most striking thing in them is the sentence with which Dr. Freundlich concludes the second lecture in his new book:

The fact that the velocity of light occurs as the greatest velocity with which an effect may propagate itself in nature throws into dazzling prominence the enormous significance of radiational energy in the structure of the universe, a significance which we are as yet far from comprehending to its full extent.

As Montaigne said of man, the last word about the physical universe is still that it is *divers et indoyant*.

New Fiction

BY GERALD GOULD

The Day-Boy. By Ronald Gurner. Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.

Anthony Dare. By Archibald Marshall. Collins. 7s. 6d. net.

Rare Luck. By W. Pett Ridge. Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

The Sun Field. By Heywood Broun. Putnam. 7s. 6d. net.

MR. GURNER'S triangle is something short of eternal—primary school, secondary school, and the *tertium quid*. He alone of these four authors seems to be definitely propagandist; but all are occupied with one particular, rather narrow, aspect of the general social problem; they are all occupied with distinctions of class. I know that bigger men have been so before them—to both Thackeray and Meredith the subject was an inflammation rather than an inspiration. But since the days of Thackeray, even since the days of Meredith, the problem has changed. Of its essence, it must always be changing: the data date. Certain facts, indeed, will obviously remain true always and everywhere. Difference in wealth will mean difference of habit, whether the wealth be reckoned in bank-balances or beeves or beans or beads; and difference of habit will not be easily overcome except by strong personal attraction. Though the man who has nine bean-rows may have the same way of life as the man who has one or the man who has ninety, he will certainly not have the same way of life as the man who has ninety thousand. The man with an income of five thousand pounds a year will do much the same things as the man with ten thousand; but most of those things simply cannot be done by the man with a hundred and fifty. There is no getting over it. If the millionaire adopts the conventions of his groom, he does not thereby approximate to his groom's point of view: he is known for eccentric, and so placed further away than ever. It is a bare matter of observable fact that class-distinctions, in the sense of differences in personal habit, must exist so long as there is wide disparity in means. But now—and this is the point—when the disparity is not wide, class-distinctions do not effectively exist. University life is the proof. Whatever may be wrong in the relations between the universities and the universe, once you are inside, there you are, a member of a democracy, if one may use that word in the loose accepted sense, not in the meticulous etymological sense expected by Sir Henry Hadow. ("Meticulous" was one of his own test-words—but I shall go on using it as I please.) A university, I say, is a democracy, because there is, in games and work, roughly an equality of opportunity. In almost every college, no doubt, there are a few undergraduates whose parents make them enormous allowances and encourage them in display and extravagance, and a few so poor that they cannot make both ends meet except by withdrawal and denial; but, in the main, what one does, others can share; and the result is a state of comradeship. I do not think Mr. Gurner quite does justice to this truth. His hero is a boy who works his way up by scholarships and never ceases to be conscious of his origin. He even asks his Oxford friends who come from public-schools whether they want him—an episode which I should deride as beyond the wildest dreams of farce if the whole book had not a rather impressive note of first-hand knowledge. That, in brief, is its main literary merit. It cannot be called a good novel, but it should prove interesting, especially to educationists. It may encourage discussion of an idea which has always seemed to me attractive—that masters trained in one sort of school should teach, not in the same sort, as they do usually, but in another. And we must be grateful to Mr. Gurner for having varied the type of

biographical novel of childhood and youth, if only by giving us a day-boy instead of a boarder!

Mr. Marshall's tale is also about a day-boy, and is also somewhat concerned with the minutiae of social intercourse. But it is far from being propagandist. Mr. Marshall advances no general ideas. He asks us to be interested in his Anthony Dare on that engaging youth's merits, and I find it hard to say why I, for one, am not. The writing is suave, the observation scrupulous, the study of motive subtle and thorough. But the result is long-winded and dull. It reads as if Mr. Marshall were adventuring beyond the bounds of his real interests. He is pre-eminently the novelist of the country-house; whether he is really, personally, less interested when he verges upon other ways of life, it would be impertinent to inquire; but certainly in this book he sounds little better than conscientious.

Mr. Pett Ridge continues to be imperturbably Mr. Pett Ridge. His young man belongs to the world of narrow means; he is "left money" and becomes successful and self-satisfied; he loses his money and apparently recovers content. It is a moral tale, and I cannot suppose that the author means it seriously; but it is part of his charm that he introduces the fairy element without ever deviating from the caustic realism of his dialogue. No praise could be too high for his achievement within its limits. He can even make jokes about kissing without losing his exquisite touch:

"If," she stammered, "if you—if you cared to kiss me, it would make it perfect." Frank complied. "Oh, thank you ever so much," said Miss Sturge. "That was kind of you, sir. It always seems to round off an outing!"

Or again:

"My dear, my dear," he whispered.

"Boy," she said, faintly, "you kiss just exactly in the old way."

"Tell me, at any time," he urged, gazing at her, "if you can suggest improvements."

'The Sun Field' is incomparably the best of the bunch. It does with perfect restraint and unflinching humour what a thousand books have failed to do—it presents the "moderns," it presents the intellectuals, with no more satire than they carry with them; it is sympathetic and scathing. In plot it recalls Mr. Shaw's 'Cashel Byron's Profession' and 'The Admirable Bashville,' that noble blank verse drama into which Mr. Shaw turned his novel because he had no time to do it in prose, with its memorable lines:

Was this the face that burnt a thousand boats?

and

He seen me coming and he done a bunk.

Byron's profession was boxing: Mr. Broun's hero is a baseball player—technically known, apparently, as a "home-run king"; and he is loved for his physical beauty by Judith, a young woman who writes on Sherwood Anderson for an austere journal called *To-Morrow*; the comedy of their mating is described by a fat, clever, modest, friendly little fellow who loves Judith himself. Judith's point of view towards the home-run king is startlingly modern, and illustrated in her exasperated exclamation:

"I may not have character enough to make this man seduce me, but I'm not such a blithering idiot that I can't get him to marry me!"

and his outburst:

"I'll do what I want. I will respect you. You're not like the rest. God damn you! I do respect you."

Quotation, however, must seem crude in comparison with the delicacy of the whole; the note is never betrayed; the very accent of the teller's mind is everywhere audible, and through it the emotional interplay has to be judged by allowing—if the metaphor may be altered—for the angle of deflection. There is abundance of wit too. An admirable book—brief, bright and American. And for the baseball language one can never be sufficiently grateful: "In the fifth inning Hoyt sneaked a curve over for a third strike on Ty Cobb." But was that virtuosity or cheating?

Round the Library Table

A MISCELLANY

TO write the history of the Byzantine Empire for over seven centuries in a single volume 'The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV' (Cambridge University Press, 50s. net) without missing any essential fact, is a task of which few persons can conceive the difficulty: to try to review it adequately in a single page is to attempt the impossible. I shall therefore only say that students of history will find it invaluable, and the educated reader much that is both new and fascinating. I do not know of any account of the continued attempts at reunion between Rome and the Eastern Church at all comparable with that in this volume. Dr. Miller's story of the Balkan States and of Greece is the result of a life devoted to the subject, and the chapters on Byzantine legislation and on Government and Administration sum up and add to all that modern learning has gathered on these subjects. It seems ungrateful in the face of such plenty to ask for more, and yet—

* * *

Professor Bury, in his introductory remarks, lays stress on the fact that it is possible to follow the history of the Eastern Roman Empire from the eighth century to its fall, along with those of its neighbours and clients, independently of the rest of Europe. This he and the band of scholars gathered round him have done admirably. But there is another aspect of Byzantine history for us on this side of Europe. While the whole of the West was a confused turmoil of barbarism, from which learning and art were beginning to emerge in a few scattered places in the eighth century and to promise a false dawn under Charlemagne, to remain at a dead level of ignorance till the eleventh century, Byzantine was a rich, civilized and cultured Empire, with all the learning and arts of the ancient world at its command. It is inconceivable that there should not have been a constant outflow to the West of Greek learning and culture during the whole of this period, either directly by the ancient trade routes or indirectly through Southern Italy and Rome. We are always meeting traces of this influence: it is time for some scholar to collect them into one body.

* * *

Moreover, the Byzantines preserved all that was left of ancient science. In medicine they had Hippocrates and his successors; in mathematics and astronomy they made constant improvements; in chemistry they had whole schools of experiments from which a few scattered manuscripts came to Italy and France; is not all this a very real part of Byzantine history, and was not this volume an appropriate place to bring it together? Again, I am by way of being a tolerably well read man, and have even gone through the old Corpus of Byzantine historians and read Psellus, but I have no general idea of Byzantine literary history apart from theology, and do not know any English book, or good German one (Dieterich is too condensed) which I could recommend. Professor Diehl gives a list of names in two pages which may mean something to a scholar of equal reading with his own, but is of no value to the general reader. What is urgently wanted is a statement of the influence of living Byzantium on Western culture; we are already familiar with the legacy we received when it was slain by the Turks.

* * *

Let me recommend in this connexion a most admirable little volume on 'The Poetics of Aristotle, its Meaning and Influence,' by Professor Lane Cooper (Harrap, 5s. net). It is from the 'Poetics' that the doctrine of the unities on the stage is commonly supposed to be derived, though as a matter of fact Aris-

totle does not teach that doctrine at all; it was first put forward as his by the Italian critics. Aristotle only demanded "unity of action"; he mentions that contemporary dramatists tried "to confine the action within the limits of one revolution of the sun," from which the Italians deduced the "unity of time"; he says nothing about "unity of place." Professor Cooper is quite literal in the interpretation he adopts of the 'catharsis' which tragedy effects. It is what Milton meant at the end of 'Samson Agonistes'—"all passion spent"—not a purification or ennobling of the spectator.

* * *

Another volume from the same publisher, 'Greek Religion and its Survivals,' by Professor W. W. Hyde (Harrap, 5s. net), suffers from the expectation raised by its title, and from a general scrappiness of style. When an author sets out to talk about Greek Religion, we expect to hear about what it really was—not only of the theology implicit in the plays of Sophocles, but of that implied by his daily life as domestic chaplain to a snake, and this side of Greek religion might as well not exist for all the author says, until he comes to the superstitions of the modern Greek peasantry, when it is almost the only thing which explains them. The origin of the local saints from Greek divinities and heroes is, as he shows, very rarely capable of being demonstrated; I think in most cases they are of Slav origin. However, Professor Hyde's book is a repertory of the popular superstitions of Eastern Europe which will be entertaining to those unfamiliar with his sources. It is quite up to the level of most of the series—"Our Debt to Greece and Rome."

* * *

Mr. Walkley's sprightly commentary on the announcement by the new Professor of Poetry at Oxford, that "the race of long-haired poets is extinct," moves one to reminiscence. About thirty years ago I was coming down to Charing Cross with a young poet who has since reached eminence, whose long raven locks, great black cloak, and large hat marked him out as the ideal tragic poet of romance. A flower girl espied him and pressed her wares on him. He refused with kindly gesture and words, and was passing on when she caught hold of his cloak: "Do, dear, and I'll throw you a hairpin in."

* * *

I have received from Paris the first numbers of the *transatlantic review*, edited by F. M. Ford. There are things in it that one simply must have—a reprinted story by Joseph Conrad and F. M. Hueffer, the first chapters of a new novel 'Some Do Not,' by Ford Madox Ford, which promises to be his best work—and some recollections by Luke Ionides, which lose in writing down much of the vigour with which he used to tell them, but most certainly ought to be preserved. Those printed refer mainly to Whistler and William Morris. The 'chroniques' make good reading, and the typographical eccentricities are amusing for the moment—they will soon become boring if we have too much of them.

* * *

I should like to recommend a forthcoming History of Aeronautics in Great Britain, from the earliest period to the end of the nineteenth century, written by Mr. J. E. Hodgson, to be published by Mr. Milford at three guineas, to subscribers. It will contain about 125 illustrations from rare and unpublished sources, and will be complete and authoritative.

LIBRARIAN

Stock Market Letter

The Stock Exchange, Thursday.

THE liveliest market in the Stock Exchange at the present time is that for Japanese 6 per cent. scrip. I am not very surprised that the Japanese people should be indignant at the price at which the loan came out, namely 87½, for Japan could have placed its loan at 90, and it seems to me that the Japanese protest is natural. Its measure can be applied to the stock as showing the cheapness of the latter. There are few more attractive investments of the speculative nature than this new loan at its current quotation of about 90½ for the fully-paid. That it will go better in time is a certainty, always presuming, of course, that Japan indulges in no more earthquakes, or convulsions of that order. The stags rushed in pell-mell to sell their stock at the opening price, which was about 1¼ premium, but the investor saw his chance and had the sense and the shrewdness to snatch the scrip from the sellers and to put it away as an excellent second-class security. Leaving out natural phenomena, as already mentioned, those Japanese Sixes should go to the neighbourhood of 95.

THE TUBES

Underground Railway stocks and shares are swayed in price by the sympathy which links them to the market in what we call the steam-stocks, but actually, they depend upon many conditions which are unique to themselves. This week's meetings of the Metropolitan, District and other Tube Railway proprietors aroused a very unusual degree of attention. People have bought the stocks and shares on account of the vastly-increased traffic that the British Empire Exhibition is expected to bring to the tubes and motor-buses. Two or three of the older railways are rumoured to be angling for control of the Metropolitan. The District's increased dividend, just declared, is thought likely to foreshadow further progress in the same direction. Reorganization details have been eagerly awaited in regard to the long-promised, long-deferred scheme of the Underground Railways of London. The rebuilding of the City and South London and the northern extension of other Tubes are outward and visible signs of the railway times. And, with the British Government giving its own guarantee to various Tube debenture stocks, in order to assist unemployment, it is natural that investment should be taking a lively interest in the business.

PROS AND CONS

Shifting winds of financial fashion have veered round from the oil market into other parts of the Stock Exchange, where greater interest has arisen by reason of the remarkable rises shown in base metals. The consequence is seen in a general reaction from the best prices touched in most of the active oil shares. The warning was raised in these columns that a good deal of the oil animation which has prevailed of late sprang from professional and semi-professional quarters, and that there was very little public at the back of the strong upward movement which rushed Shells, Burmahs, Royal Dutch and a number of other market leaders, into such prominence. The advance in the price of crude oil served to add fuel to the flame of optimism, yet, as soon as other interests arose outside the oil market, the light of hope became quickly subdued.

THE STOCK EXCHANGE CINDERELLA

The rubber market plays Cinderella in the Stock Exchange. While many of its sister sections are attracting public attention, the rubber share department is left severely alone. Prices move but little, and, in spite of the disappointing declines in the price of the raw produce, few people come in as sellers of rubber

shares. The anticipated rubber "famine" did not materialize in the United States at the end of last year, nor do the Americans appear to be at all anxious to add to their existing stocks of the stuff. Play is made with the manner in which the motor-car industry continues to expand in the States, this being deemed an inevitable aid, sooner or later, to the consumption of those rubber stocks the accumulation of which hangs round the neck of the market like the Old Man of the Sea. American motor-car manufacturers, however, are not buying rubber in any substantially increased quantities.

Meanwhile, an added restriction of output has come into force this month, much to the gratification, no doubt, of the Dutch planters, who are under no obligation to modify their tapping programmes. The best-class British rubber concerns can make respectable profits even with rubber at the present price, but there is nothing sensational enough in the outlook to warrant any immediate return of activity to the rubber share market, and it looks as though prices are likely to continue in the doldrums for some time to come. Luckily, it is the unexpected which happens in the Stock Exchange as well as in other walks of life, and, should there arise any keen competition for the raw material, the present drab complexion of rubber shares would be changed in the twinkling of an eye.

TIN PROFITS

It would be more than a little ludicrous to claim credit for having advised the purchases of such tin shares as those recommended here a few weeks ago, which have risen substantially in price, for the simple reason that almost everything connected with tin mining has undergone very material appreciation this month. Reference to the matter may be justified, however, by the desirability of answering the many questions which arise as to whether people with good profits on their tin shares should take advantage of the rise, or whether they should retain their holdings for something better. In the mining world, nobody can ever tell what is going to happen, and the speculative purchaser of tin shares who can see a reasonable profit on the price which he paid for his shares, should take it and be thankful for the gifts which the gods have provided. The outlook for tin is bright, and prospects point to further advances in share values. Dividends this year are going to be exceedingly good. The speculator who has paid for his tin shares, especially those connected with the Middle East, need be in no hurry to realize, but the man who was simply out for a decent turn, and who can now secure it in consequence of the rise in prices, cannot hurt by securing his profit and letting the next fellow take the risk.

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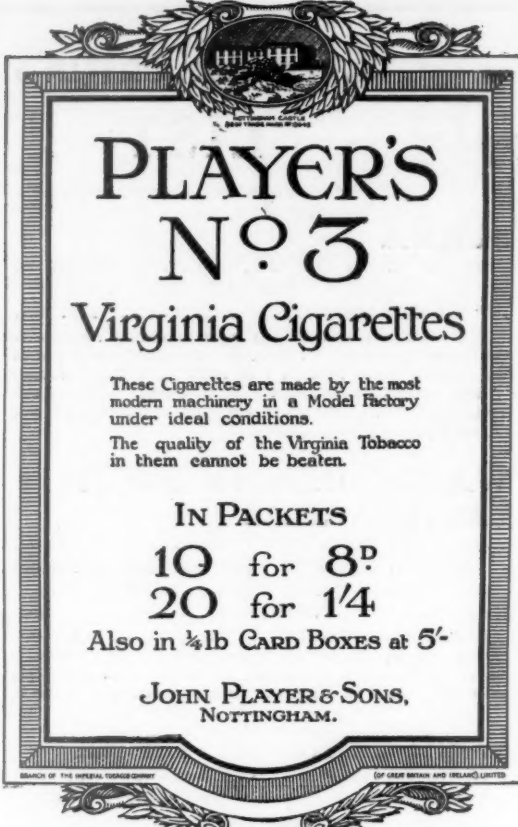
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4. Ready he stands our noddles to embellish.
5. Small, but affords a very pleasant relish.
6. To full discussion sometimes detrimental.
7. Curtail a light pavilion oriental.
8. Famed for the cheeses that its people make.
9. Half a rebound—our childhood's duck-and-drake.
10. When danger's nigh its warning sound is heard.
11. A happy season, but uncommon word.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 101.

"GREAT CHAM OF LETTERS" HIS ADMIRERS HAILED HIM.

1. Poor Louis called it, but at need it failed him.
2. Lost its initial: clearest heavenly blue.
3. Nor cow nor sheep, but midway 'twixt the two.
4. The heart of that which all o'erwhelms at last.
5. Spreads the fell plague—the people perish fast.
6. Etruscan priests and princes bore this name.
7. What dance surprised the home-returning dame?
8. First of barbarians in Italia reigning.
9. Much used by fair ones in the East for staining.
10. Reverse a murderous or a healing draught.
11. He practises a very ancient craft.
12. Fatal it may be, if the drugs are strong.
13. Subtract one row, the word won't be too long.

Solution of Acrostic No. 101

S	tates-general	L	1 From the Arabic <i>lazward</i> , blue,
A	zur	E ¹	whence <i>laps-lazuli</i> , the sapphire.
M	usk-o	X	The initial <i>l</i> was lost through
r	U	In	being mistaken for the article.
E	pidemi	C	
L	ucum	O	
J	i	G ²	2 "When she got back he was dancing
O	doace	R ³	a jig."— <i>Mother Hubbard</i> .
H	enn	A	3 See Gibbon, chap. xxxvi.
N	oito	P	
S	mit	H	
O	ver-dos	E	
N	a	R	row

ACROSTIC No. 101.—The winner is Mr. A. W. Cooke, 96 Abington Street, Northampton, who has selected as his prize 'Wine of Fury,' by Leigh Rogers, published by Grant Richards and reviewed in our columns on February 9 under the title 'New Fiction.' Forty-five other competitors named this book, twenty-one chose 'Judgment of Death,' sixteen 'The Unseemly Adventure,' ten 'Casanova in England,' eight 'Shelley and the Unromantics,' etc., etc.

Correct solutions were also received from St. Ives, Borden, Carrie, John Lennie, Coque, Old Mancunian, B. Alder, Materfamilias, Mrs. J. Butler, and Puss.

RESULT OF OUR SIXTH QUARTERLY COMPETITION.—Viscount Doneraile and the Rev. J. Wallace Kidston tied for the Prize, with six mistakes each, Martha being third with eight, Merton and Mrs. J. Butler fourth and fifth with nine; Boskerris, Lillian, Oakapple, St. Ives and Varach come next with eleven mistakes each, and J. Lennie made twelve. The tie being decided by lot, as usual, the Rev. J. Wallace Kidston proved the winner, and is requested to choose a book in accordance with our conditions: any book reviewed by us during the quarter, not exceeding Two Guineas in value.

Other results and Answers to Correspondents are unavoidably held over.

No. 1a

The Story of Coal

The Foundation of the British Empire

Two hundred years ago Great Britain was an agricultural State supporting only about six million people.

To-day it is the greatest manufacturing and trading State in the Old World, with a population of forty-three millions.

That change has been wrought by the enterprise and energy of the private individuals who make up the Nation and by the development of abundant resources of fuel so situated that they could easily be mined and moved.

In other words, by Private Enterprise and cheap coal.

Existence in our climate without plentiful supplies of cheap coal would be unendurable.

Gas and Electricity are both produced from coal.

Everything we wear and use depends for its manufacture upon coal and for its cheapness upon the price of coal.

The supremacy of our shipping was built and rests upon cheap coal of good quality.

Four-fifths of the food we eat comes from abroad. It is paid for by the export of goods manufactured in our Country—which manufactures depend upon coal—and of coal itself.

On sixty-four days in 1922 the whole of the food we imported was paid for by exported coal.

To coal more than any other material factor, we owed our ability to withstand the strain of the War, to support the weight of our alliances, and finally to emerge victorious.

There is at present no satisfactory substitute for coal, nor are there any substitutes for the energetic management and persistent optimism of Private Enterprise. Destroy Private Enterprise, make cheap coal impossible, and the British Empire falls; British trade, commerce and industry dwindle; and the population of Britain drops to a third of its present numbers as a result of emigration and starvation.

If you are interested in The Story of Coal cut this advertisement out and file it. It will be followed by others telling other parts of the Story. Look out for them. They are being issued on behalf of the Colliery Owners of Great Britain by PHILIP GEE, 40, King Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.2, from whom further information about the Coal Mining Industry can be obtained.

Company Meeting.

THE
LONDON ELECTRIC RAILWAY

COMBINED RESULTS.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Underground Railway Group was held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W., on Thursday last.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Ashford, P.C., presided. The notice convening the meeting having been read, the Chairman said:—

My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,—

The gross traffic receipts for 1923 are £158,000 less than those for 1922. It is a small decline of just over 1 per cent. The passengers carried are, however, increased by 173 millions. It is a large advance of almost 15 per cent. It is far more than a normal advance due to growth of population and other regular causes, and indicates a renewed growth of the travel habit which is welcome and encouraging. In fact, it is expected when all the figures are published that the year 1923 will establish a fresh record of 414 journeys per head of the population. This may be compared with the corresponding figure of 305 for 1913, and marks one of the stimulating effects which the war has had upon the national life. The result is especially remarkable when allowance is made for the partial closing for traffic of the City and South London Railway throughout the year.

It will at once occur to you to ask how it is that with such increased volume of travel traffic receipts are reduced. There are several reasons. There would seem to have been a transfer of season ticket-holders to the slightly cheaper workmen's return tickets which are purchased day by day and involve no considerable outlay at one time. The practice casts a curious side-light upon the present restriction of spending power. There would seem to have been a general shortening of the average length of journey taken, which would suggest that fewer long distance journeys, relative to the total number of journeys, are taken than formerly. This is borne out by the statistics of passenger booking. While there has been an increase in the numbers booked by fares of 2d. and under, there has been a decrease in those booked at fares over 2d., but not over 6d., of 13 per cent., and in those at fares over 6d. of 27 per cent., reflecting once more the present monetary stringency. But the chief cause has been the re-introduction of 1d. fares upon the omnibuses for distances of approximately one mile, with consequent adjustments in the fares of higher denominations. This accounts for the really significant increase of 35 per cent. in the traffic at fares of 2d. and under, a traffic which has always formed the bulk of the traffic carried. In consequence, the average receipt per passenger has fallen from just under 2½d. to just over 2d., or by 14 per cent. These statistics, together with many others relating to this subject, are engaging the close attention of your officers, as they would seem to point to some needed adjustments in the scheme of fares and rates now in force. Already we have reached the decision that we should not be justified in asking Parliament to continue the extra charging powers conferred on your railways in 1920.

It is unfortunate that the increase in the number of passengers carried is wholly attributable to the omnibuses. Their increase is 193 millions, or 23 per cent., whereas the railways show a decrease of 20 millions, or 6 per cent. The City and South London Railway only contributed 11 millions of passengers, as against 25 millions in the previous year, so that the partial closing of this railway accounts for much more than half the loss, but making every allowance for the temporary failure of this link in the underground system, the railways have rather fallen back than advanced. This is the disappointing feature; and for what consolation it may be to you, I would point out that it is not a feature confined to your railways. The Metropolitan Railway in 1923 carried almost 3 million passengers less. It also appears on tramways. The three tramway companies with which your Companies are closely associated show a decrease of 3 millions of passengers, and the London County Council Tramways, so far as I can judge, have carried in 1923 some 7 million fewer passengers than they did in 1922. The feature is therefore a general one.

The expenditure in 1923 was round about £10,000,000, which was only less by £21,000 than that of 1922. With one exception there has been no marked change in the level of prices during the year, whether for labour or for materials. Coal has increased in price by 3 per cent. Wages, both on railways and on omnibuses, are lower by about 3 per cent. The exception is motor spirit, which continued to fall in price throughout the year, and showed on the average a drop of 28 per cent. Since the opening of this year the price has gone up again.

This summary treatment of expenditure, however, disguises the true facts of the situation, for expenditure on the railways shows a decrease of £206,000, or 7 per cent., while expenditure on the omnibuses shows an increase of £185,000, or 2 per cent. To account for this you must turn to the measure of the work accomplished. Upon the railways 57 millions of car miles were run, or 1 million less than in the preceding year, which is more than accounted for by the partial closing of the City and South London Railway. In fact, services were improved during the year to maintain the attractiveness of the railways against omnibus competition without, unfortunately, any return in improved traffic. The average cost per car mile was fortunately less than in the preceding year by about 5 per cent., so that the cost of the additional miles run was more than met by economies. Upon the

omnibuses 119 millions of car miles were run, or 24 millions more than in 1922, an increase of 25 per cent. in the service afforded to the public. Here again the cost per car mile was reduced, and this time by 18 per cent., due in large part to the distribution of the fixed expenditure over the greater aggregate service. This augmented service yielded an almost proportionate growth in the number of passengers carried, namely, 23 per cent., so that from a purely omnibus point of view it was justified.

The net receipts of your Companies are less by £138,000 than they were a year ago, but this is more than made good by the gain in miscellaneous receipts of £152,000, mainly attributable to interest received from various sources, to profits upon the realization of investments and to advertising, so that the total net income is greater by £15,000. There is one source of your miscellaneous receipts to which I would direct your attention. A sum of £352,000, or almost half the whole, is obtained from commercial advertisements displayed on the railways and omnibuses. This sum is the net amount received after meeting all expenses connected with the conduct of this business. We have always managed the advertising on the omnibuses directly, and found in it a continually expanding source of revenue. We have now taken over from the various contractors the advertising on the railways, and hope to find in it also opportunity for expansion. I think we should congratulate those of our officers who are employed upon this task upon the measure of success which they have so far achieved.

The total amount of net income is £2,992,000, as against £2,977,000 in 1922. While the amount required for the dividends on the guaranteed and preference stocks is unchanged, the amount required for interest, rentals and fixed charges is more by £83,000 than in the preceding year. This is due to a variety of items, the principal being the interest on further issues of debenture stocks. The large issues of 4½ per cent. Redeemable Second Debenture Stocks have not yet to be supported out of revenue, only £6,000 of revenue monies being applied to that purpose last year. On this account we have continued to make the special reserve provision of £82,500 against the time when, before the works are fully remunerative, the burden must fall heavily on revenue. We have reduced the amount appropriated to reserve for contingencies and renewals by £75,000, so that as a result the balance in respect of the year's working available for dividends on ordinary stocks and shares is approximately the same as it was a year ago, and stands at £982,000, the difference being a slight increase of £7,000.

Turning now to the dividends which will be submitted to you for confirmation. The interest and dividends on all prior charges securities will be met in full. With regard to ordinary stocks and shares, the London Electric Railway Company, the City and South London Railway Company and the Central London Railway Company will be invited to declare dividends at the rate of 4 per cent., as in 1922. The Metropolitan District Railway Company, which paid 3 per cent. in 1922, will be invited to raise this dividend to 3½ per cent. The London General Omnibus Company, Limited, will be asked to pay 9 per cent. free of income tax. This is half per cent. more than in 1922. If, however, allowance is made for the payments in respect of income tax it will be found that the gross amount distributed is almost identical, the variation not being more than £4,000. The increased rate of distribution is consequent upon the decreased rate of income tax payable. When these dividends are paid the average rate of return on the ordinary capital of the Common Fund Companies will be 4.8 per cent., and upon all the capital of whatever class in the Common Fund Companies 4.5 per cent. We are committed to the policy of a reasonable return upon this capital and no more, but we are still seeking that reasonable return.

Cheap finance means cheaper fares with better service. A common financial interest is the surest basis upon which to build a single system of transport. Our own Common Fund has proved of inestimable advantage to us, less for our own interests than for those of the public and the employees perhaps. The key to the whole problem is progressive development, and this is only possible where all obligations to public, to employees, and to stockholders are satisfactorily discharged. Transport is the very life of a metropolis like London, and its provision should not be left to chance. It demands forethought and it demands sacrifice. These are hard to come by in a business which is engaged in a daily struggle to maintain its position.

It seems to me that whatever form traffic control may take, if it does not obstruct the carrying on of London traffic in accordance with the principles which I have laid down, then we may support it without concerning ourselves too closely with those much-disputed political aspects of the problem. In fact, upon those aspects of the problem I have only one thing to say, and that is, that we should look to see traffic control administered by a fair and impartial body, capable of reaching judicial decisions, and without particular interest in any form or class of transport.

This has not been quite the customary speech to which you have listened in the past. I have thought it desirable that I should this year do something more than merely review the year's results, that I should say a few words in support and explanation of a policy with regard to London Traffic. I hope what I have said may be useful in giving you some insight into the problems that perplex us and in enlisting your concurrence in the policy which we are pursuing.

The necessary resolutions having been adopted the meeting terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman.

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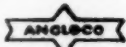
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Books

BOOKS.—Salt's The Flogging Craze, 4s.; Hobson's Worcester Porcelain, £6 6s.; Wheatley's Pepys's Diary, 8 vols., £2 15s.; Post Office London Directory with Co. Suburbs, 1923, 27s. 6d.; Maupassant's Novels in English, 10 vols., nice set, £3; Dugdale's Warwickshire, best edition, 2 vols., 1730, rare, £9 9s.; Owen Jones's Grammar of Ornament, £3 3s.; Thackeray's Works, nice set, 12 vols., £3; R. L. Stevenson's Works, "Vailima," Edit., 26 vols., £38; Hartland's Primitive Paternity, 2 vols., 1900, 30s.; Maeterlinck's The Blue Bird, illustrated by Robinson, 30s.; The Sketch, 80 vols., fine lot, £30; Bon Gaultier Book of Ballads, illustrated by Doyle, Leech and Crowquill (scarce), 10s. 6d.; Lecky, History of England in the Eighteenth Century, 7 vols., 1913, 25s.; Morris, Seats of Noblemen and Gentlemen of Great Britain and Ireland, coloured plates, 7 vols., fine set, £5 5s.; Schliemann's Troy and its Remains, cuts of 500 Objects of Antiquity, 1875, 30s.; Troja, Researches and Discoveries on the Site of Homer's Troy, 1884, 30s.; Hammond's Masonic Emblems and Jewels, 1917, 21s.; Studies from Russian Ballet, 21s. for 6s.; George Eliot's Works and Life, 24 vols., £5 5s.; Gautier's Works, Edit. de Luxe, 12 vols., £5 10s.; The Tatler, Illus. Journal, 46 vols., fine lot, £21; Lord Morley's Works, Edit. de Luxe, 15 vols., £15 15s. Send also for Catalogue, 100,000 bargains on hand. If you want a book, and have failed to find it elsewhere, try me. **WANTED**—Buller's Birds of New Zealand, 1888, 2 vols., £6 offered. **EDWARD BAKER'S GREAT BOOKSHOP**, 14-16, John Bright Street, Birmingham.

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Company Meeting

S.T.D. MOTORS, LTD.

IMPROVED POSITION AND OUTLOOK.

NOTABLE RACING SUCCESSES.

THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of S.T.D. Motors, Ltd., was held on the 19th inst. at Winchester House, E.C.

Mr. James Todd, J.P., F.C.A. (the Chairman), said that a year ago the directors had reason to anticipate being able to submit a more satisfactory result at the end of last year's trading. While all their hopes had not been fulfilled, sufficient progress had been made to justify the belief that the worst of the long-continued trade depression had now been passed, and that conditions all round had improved to an extent which permitted them to indulge in the belief that the improvement was permanent and would be maintained. They had recently made an interim distribution of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. dividend on the Preferred Ordinary shares.

The complete reorganization of their French works, and re-designing of models produced there, although a long and very expensive process, had been an unqualified success. Their French works at Suresnes were now employed to their utmost capacity, and there was no difficulty in selling the whole of their output in France. The reputation of the car had been entirely re-established, and stood to-day much higher than ever. The 1924 models were deservedly described as the best light cars in France to-day. The two big international road races for motor-cars—viz., the French Grand Prix for light cars, and the Spanish Grand Prix for light cars—were both won during the past year, for the second year in succession, by models produced at their French works. A satisfactory trading profit at the French works was anticipated for the year ended December 31 last.

SUNBEAM PROFITS.

Dealing with the principal of the subsidiary companies of S.T.D. Motors in this country, the Chairman said it was evident at the beginning of 1923 that the Sunbeam new models, which were just then coming into full production, were going to be a great success. Despite working under considerable disadvantages at the beginning of the year, the Sunbeam net profit for the 12 months amounted to £101,000. During the past year the greatest international road race in Europe, viz., the French Grand Prix for big cars, was won by a Sunbeam. The three Sunbeam cars which entered for the race achieved the extraordinary performance of finishing 1st, 2nd and 4th against the pick of the world's racing cars. A Sunbeam car also won the Spanish Grand Prix for big cars.

Jonas Woodhead and Sons had again had a successful year, and the net profits would amount to approximately £24,000, being £7,000 increase on the previous year's profits.

Heenan and Froude had shown a small profit on the year, and prospects were certainly improving all round in this branch of engineering. Several big contracts had been obtained lately.

The works of the Darracq Motor Engineering Company were solely confined to the building of bodies for Talbot chassis and for chassis imported into this country from their French works. It was anticipated that there might be a small loss on the year's trading.

VALUE OF ASSETS.

The assets of S.T.D. Motors, incorporating the constituent companies in which they held the whole or practically the whole of the share capital, showed, on the figures of the last available balance sheets of the various companies, a surplus of £3,386,775 over the liabilities, as against the issued capital of £3,224,408, and it was estimated that the figures would show a very considerably increased value if taken up to the end of 1923.

The prospects of the subsidiary companies having improved all round, the directors were justified in anticipating increased profits for the current year, and those profits would be available for dividend distribution when some method of funding outstanding obligations had been adopted. The directors favoured a scheme of short-term notes, but exactly on what terms and in what form they would be issued had not yet been finally determined.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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